THE RING PREDICTS ... WHAT'S AHEAD FOR 2003

"THE BIBLE OF BOXING" ®

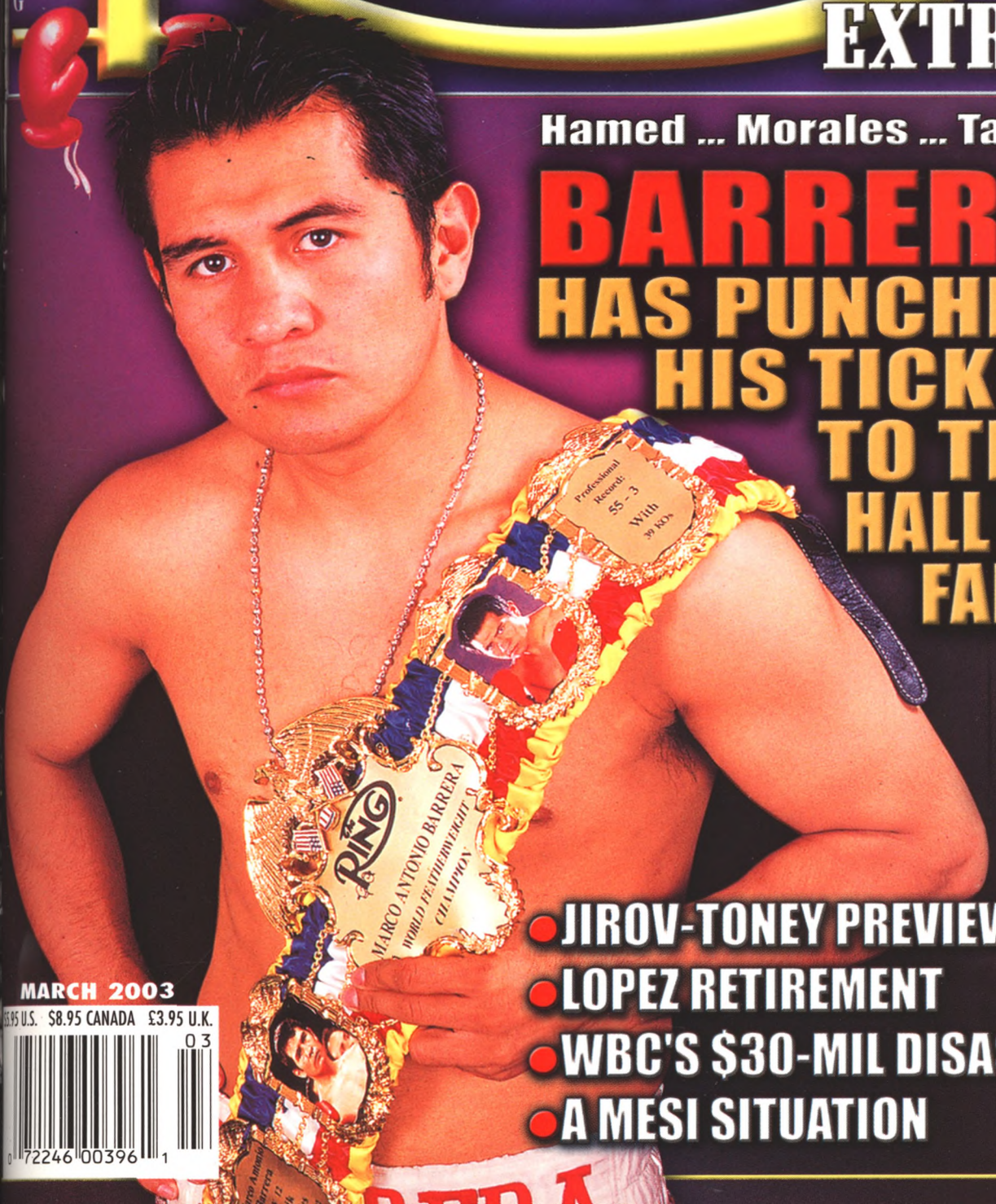
THE RING

The RING ®

EXTRA

Hamed ... Morales ... Tapia

BARRERA HAS PUNCHED HIS TICKET TO THE HALL OF FAME



- JIROV-TONEY PREVIEW
- LOPEZ RETIREMENT
- WBC'S $30-MIL DISASTER
- A MESI SITUATION

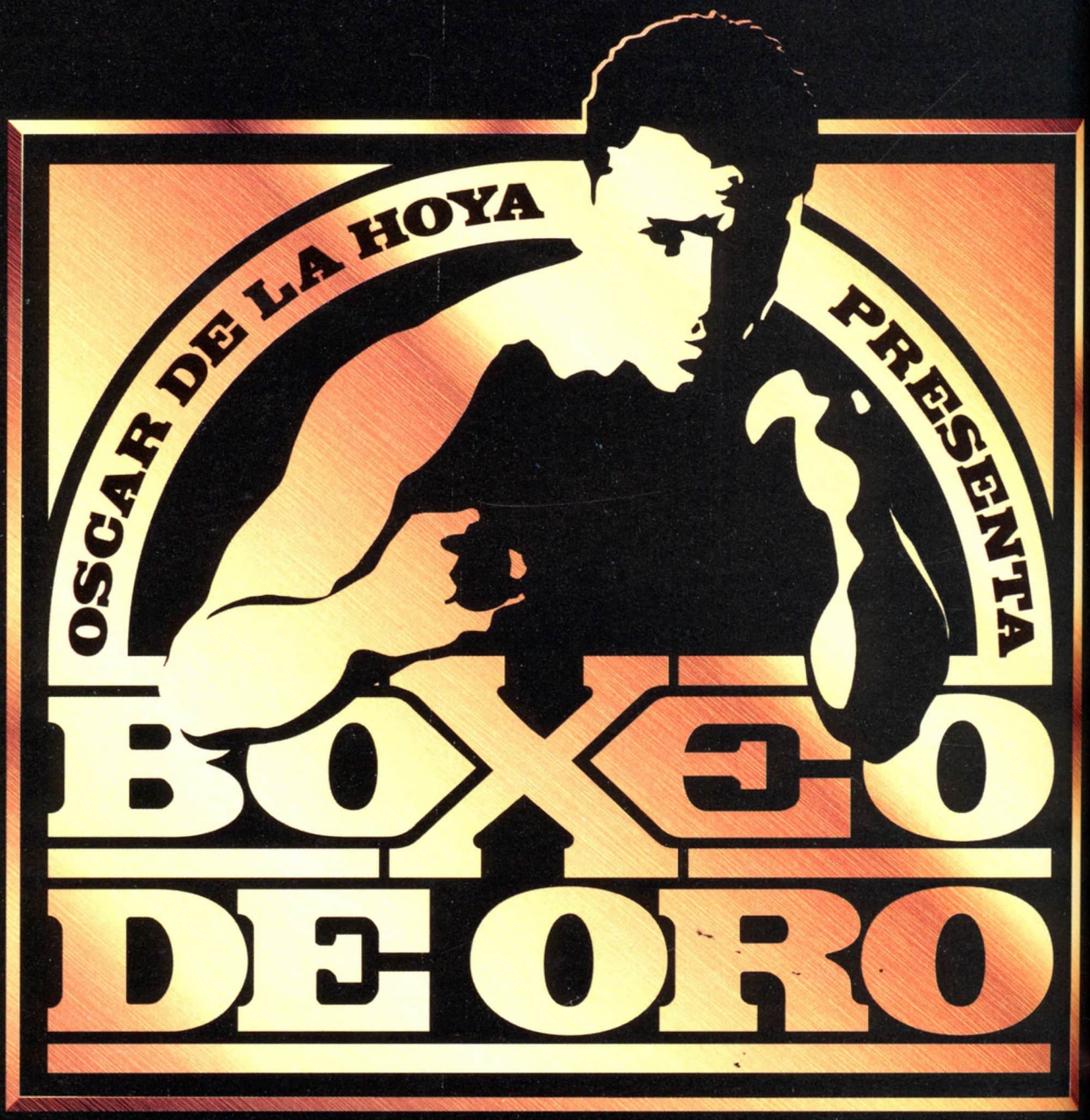
MARCH 2003

$5.95 U.S. $8.95 CANADA £3.95 U.K.

03

0 72246 00396 1

HBO LATINO INTRODUCES AN EXCITING NEW BOXING SERIES

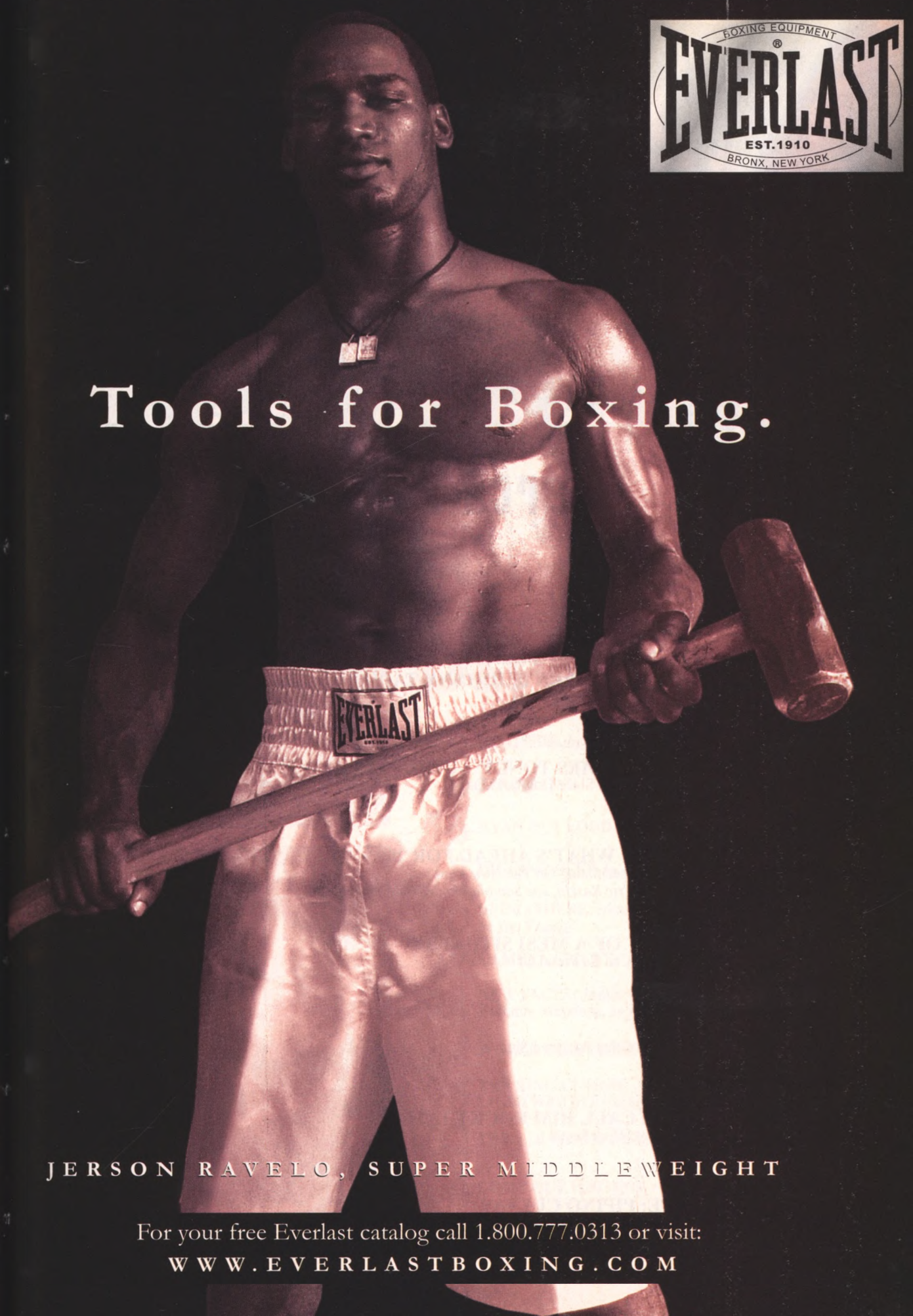


COMING TO HBO JANUARY, 2003

Latino™

Suscribe online at HBO.com AOL Keyword: HBO

©2002 Home Box Office, a Division of Time Warner Entertainment Company, L.P. All rights reserved. HBO Latino™ is a service mark of Time Warner Entertainment Company, L.P.


BOXING EQUIPMENT
EVERLAST
EST.1910
BRONX, NEW YORK
Tools for Boxing.
EVERLAST
JERSON RAVELO, SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT
For your free Everlast catalog call 1.800.777.0313 or visit:
WWW.EVERLASTBOXING.COM

The RING EXTRA

CONTENTS

March 2003

FEATURES

28 **MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA & JOHNNY TAPIA**
Different Directions To The Same Destination
By Ivan Goldman

34 **VASSILIY JIROV vs. JAMES TONEY**
The Best Cruiserweight Matchup Since Holyfield-Qawi?
By David Mayo

39 **THE RING PREDICTS: WHAT'S AHEAD FOR 2003**
A Special 15-Page Section Speculating On The New Year
Compiled by Nigel Collins, Eric Raskin, Joe Santoliquito, & William Dettloff

56 **MAKING THE BEST OF A MESI SITUATION**
Finally, An Athlete Buffalo Can Be Proud Of
By Tim Graham

62 **ALPHABET TALES**
The $30-Million Typo And Other Assorted Sins
By Scott Shaffer

68 **RICARDO LOPEZ: CALL HIM ROCKY LITE**
"Finito" Finishes His Career Undefeated
By Ted Bodenrader

76 **THE RING UPDATE: PIPINO CUEVAS**
He Hooked Fans And Opponents Alike
By Robert Cassidy

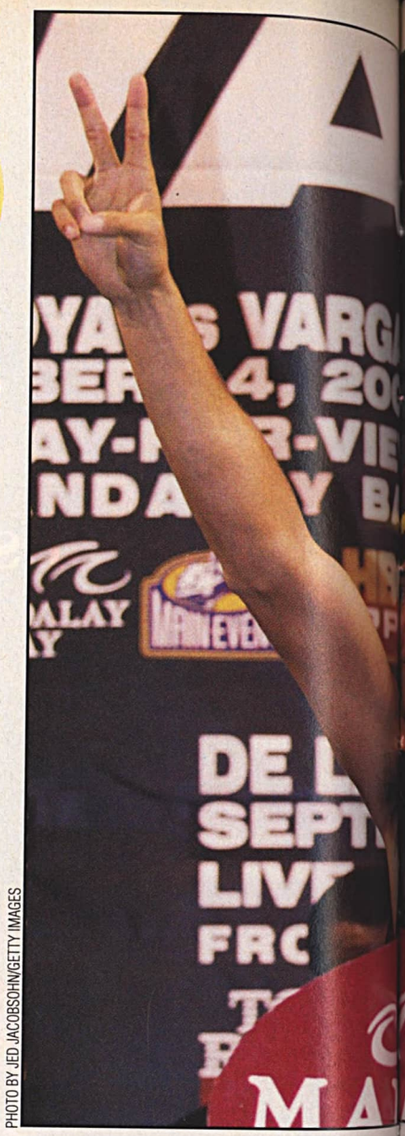


PHOTO BY JED JACOBSOHN/GETTY IMAGES

Cover: *Marco Antonio Barrera by Jan Sanders*

Cover Design: *Joe Kalman*

Ringside Reports And Analyses

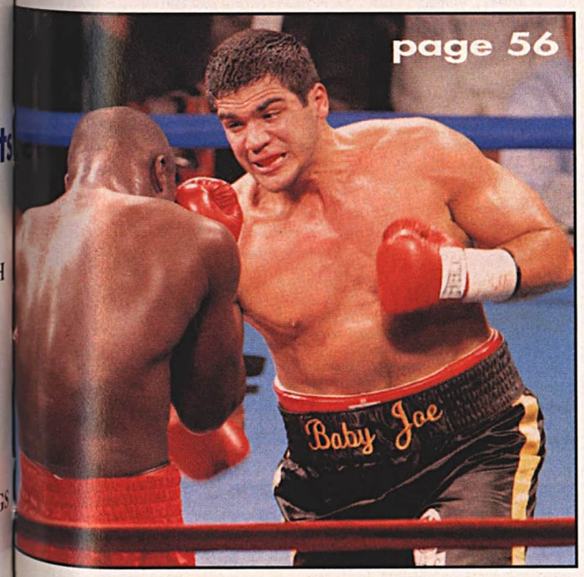
86 FIGHTER OF THE MONTH & RINGSIDE REPORTS

Ratings

13 RATINGS ANALYSIS

14 THE RING'S INTERNATIONAL RATINGS

94 ALPHABET RATINGS



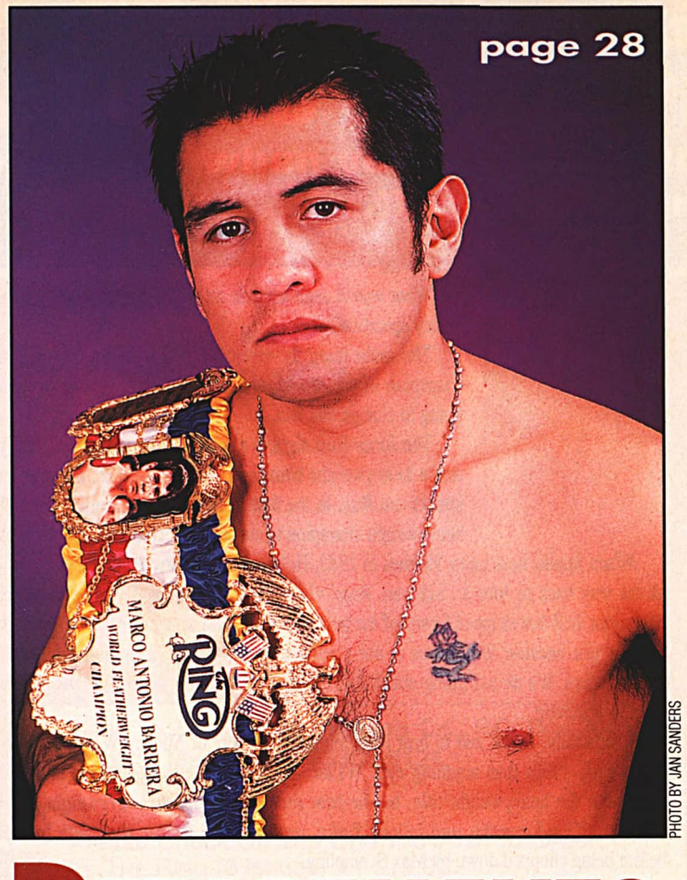


PHOTO BY JAN SANDERS

DEPARTMENTS

6 RINGSIDE, *by Nigel Collins*

8 ROUND ONE

16 RYAN OUT LOUD, *by Jeff Ryan*

18 DIGGING DEEP, *by Ivan Goldman*

20 BEING THERE: Mountaineer Race Track And Resort, *by Jim Trunzo*

22 CAMERA CLICKS

24 NEW FACES: Junior Middleweight Epifanio Mendoza, *by Joe Santoliquito*

84 WORLDWIDE FIGHT RESULTS

96 THE RING CLASSIC: DURAN: WAS HE THE GREATEST LIGHTWEIGHT CHAMPION OF ALL-TIME?, *by Jack Fiske*

102 THE A, B, C, AND DEAS OF BOXING, *by Tommy Deas*

104 COME OUT WRITING

106 LOOKING AHEAD, *by Eric Raskin*

RINGSIDE

Let's assume for discussion's sake that Roy Jones really means what he says and intends to go ahead with his proposed bout against WBA heavyweight titleholder John Ruiz. Now, let's take an even bigger leap of faith and say that Jones wins.

What would such a result mean for boxing history in general and Jones' legacy specifically?

The main thing to remember is that Lennox Lewis is the heavyweight champion of the world, and nothing that happens in a Jones-Ruiz fight is going to change that fact.

The Jones-Ruiz fight is a match between the light heavyweight champion and a heavyweight contender—nothing more, nothing less. Even if Jones knocks out Ruiz in the first round, Michael Spinks will still be the only light heavyweight champion to successfully challenge for the heavyweight title.

When Spinks beat Larry Holmes in 1985, Holmes was undefeated and had a clear-cut lineage going all the way back to John L. Sullivan. Ruiz' claim, on the other hand, can be traced back to a shameful backroom deal that stripped Lewis of the belt he'd won in the ring against Evander Holyfield.

But just because Ruiz-Jones is not a genuine heavyweight championship bout doesn't mean it's without merit. It's an intriguing match that deserves the support of boxing fans, and one that I look forward to watching.

Historically, Jones' bid to beat Ruiz reminds me more of Mickey Walker's heavyweight campaign in the early-1930s than anything else. Walker, the former welterweight and middleweight king, never fought for the heavyweight title, but he beat some pretty decent heavyweight contenders in Paulino Uzcudun, King Levinsky, and Johnny Risko, and also held former champion Jack Sharkey to a draw before being chopped down by Max Schmeling.

Whenever people discuss Walker's place in history, his success against heavyweights always boosts his overall standing, and the same will hold true for Jones if he beats Ruiz. Jones deserves credit for fighting a man significantly larger that himself. It's the first Jones fight in almost a decade where you're not sure who's going to win before the opening bell rings. And that's a good thing. But to compare such a victory to Spinks' unprecedented triumph over Holmes is inaccurate and misleading.

To equal Spinks' accomplishment, Jones will have to beat Lennox Lewis, something I don't think even Jones believes is possible.

***

I received a fascinating inquiry from a reader concerning the death of Pedro Alcazar following his bout with Fernando Montiel. The reader wondered if riding the roller-coaster at the Stratosphere the day after the fight may have contributed to the injury that killed Alcazar. As those familiar with the tragedy know, Alcazar's symptoms did not manifest themselves until approximately 36 hours after the fight, which is almost unprecedented in such cases.

I asked Dr. Margaret Goodman, who attended to Alcazar immediately after the fight in her role as one of Nevada's ringside physicians, what she thought about the roller-coaster theory.

It turns out that Alcazar did *not* ride the roller-coaster as was previously reported. But according to Dr. Goodman, "any postfight activity, including something as potentially jarring as a roller-coaster, could present a potential danger to a boxer."

Had Alcazar ridden a roller-coaster, he or any other boxer doing so in the immediate aftermath of a knockout loss would risk falling victim to what's know as Second Impact Syndrome. This can occur when a fighter suffering a seemingly minor head injury then suffers another minor head trauma. Together, these two seemingly insignificant injuries can add up to a cerebral hemorrhage and possibly death.

The most important thing for fighters and their handlers to remember is that the brain is like any other part of the body. It needs rest after a fight, even from the sort of jolt it could receive from a roller-coaster ride.

Nigel Collins
Editor-in-Chief

Volume 82, No. 3 **March 2003**

The Ring

THE RING
"The Bible Of Boxing"

NATHANIEL S. FLEISCHER
1888-1972 Founder

STUART M. SAKS
Publisher

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Nigel Collins
MANAGING EDITOR Eric Raskin
ASSOCIATE EDITOR Joseph Santoliquito
SENIOR ART DIRECTOR Walt Schmidt
ART DIRECTORS Joseph Kalmar
Greg Steven
Natalie Burk
PRODUCTION MANAGER Bethany Lawler
PRE-PRESS DIRECTOR Cliff Camp
IMAGING DIRECTOR Michael Kilgo
ASSISTANT EDITORS Dave Lenke
Brandi Mankiewicz
SENIOR WRITER William Dettl

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
Kenneth J. Gudaitis

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR
David Tyler

NATIONAL CIRCULATION MANAGERS
Robert Nucci
Rose Ann Adolfi
Dave Hagman

ADVERTISING DIRECTOR
Vincent Bellissima
(215) 643-6385
vbellissima@kappapublishing.com

ADVERTISING ASSISTANT
Dianne Weber

SUBSCRIPTION INQUIRIES
London Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 2029, Dept. 9
Marion, OH 43306-8121
(815) 734-1212

The Ring (ISSN: 0035-5410), Vol. 82, No.3 (Extra, March 2003) is published monthly, with an additional issues in August and December, by London Publishing Co., 7002 W. Butler Pike, Ambler, PA 19002. Periodicals postage paid at Ambler, PA 19002 and additional post offices. Postmaster: Send change of address notices to: The Ring, P.O. Box 2029, Dept. 9, Marion, OH 43306-8121. Single copy price $5.95 ($8.95 in Canada, £3.95 in U.K.). Subscription price $59.64 in the U.S., $69.24 in Canada and remaining countries. Not responsible for the loss or non-return of unsolicited articles or photographs, which will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope bearing the proper amount of postage.

The entire contents of this magazine are copyright ©2002 London Publishing Co. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher. All rights reserved.

FOR ADVERTISING INQUIRIES AND RATES: (215) 643-6385. U.S. and Canadian distribution by Kable Distribution Services Inc., 641 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10022. International distribution by Worldwide Media Service Inc., 115 East 23rd St., New York, NY 10010, U.K. distribution by Comag, Tavistock Rd., West Drayton, Middlesex UB77QE, England.

Printed in U.S.A.

SUBSCRIBE TO THE RING AND $19 IS YOURS TO KEEP!

That's just about what you'll save when you subscribe to THE RING for a year!

Each issue of THE RING contains the best in worldwide boxing coverage with the most dynamic ringside photography ... Columns by the most renowned boxing journalists ... The most respected ratings in the business ... A dip into our vast archives with The Ring Classic ... New Faces ... Camera Clicks.

THERE'S MORE!

Alternating with THE RING every other month is the 108-page RING EXTRA. It's THE RING—and then some!

SAVE ALMOST $19.00!

Convenience. Savings. Service. What better reasons than those to subscribe to THE RING? With 80 years behind us, THE RING long ago earned the distinction "The Bible Of Boxing." Now is the perfect time to take advantage of this tremendous offer.

Send To: **London Publishing Co.**, P.O. Box 2021, Dept. 9, Marion, OH 43306-8121

THREE WAYS TO SAVE!

Please Check Off The One You Wish To Order:

☐ THE RING (6 issues) for $19.00.
That's a savings of nearly $5.00!

☐ THE RING EXTRA (6 issues) for $28.50.
That's a savings of more than $7.00!

Save $19.00!

☐ All 12 issues of THE RING for $41.00.

Please indicate method of payment:

☐ Check or money order (enclosed and payable to London Publishing Co.)

☐ VISA # _____

☐ MasterCard # _____
Expiration Date: ___/___
MO/YR

Signature: _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____ APT. _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

☐ New Subscription ☐ Renewal

FOR CANADA AND ALL OTHER COUNTRIES: $23.80 FOR THE RING ($34.00 AIRMAIL); $33.30 FOR THE RING EXTRA ($43.50 AIRMAIL); $50.60 FOR THE COMBINATION ($71.00 AIRMAIL). INTERNATIONAL MONEY ORDERS ONLY IN U.S. FUNDS ONLY. PLEASE ALLOW UP TO EIGHT WEEKS BEFORE YOU RECEIVE YOUR FIRST MAGAZINE. OFFER EXPIRES JANUARY 31, 2004.

A1302R

ROUND ONE

MAX GOES MAINSTREAM

Watching *Around The Horn* (5 p.m. ET), Max Kellerman's new half-hour show on ESPN, is a lit like watching a buddy marry the wrong woman.

It's no secret that Kellerman has been a good friend to THE RING since becoming the studio co-host fo ESPN2's *Friday Night Fights*. And I really wanted to like Max's new show. Honest. But after watchin the first two episodes, I don't think I'll be programming the VCR on a regular basis so I can watch it whe I get home from work.

Actually, Max does a fine job; he's bright-eyed, enthusiastic, and opinionated, just like he is on th *FNF*. It's the show I have problems with.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ESPN

***Kellerman goes* Around The Horn**

Scheduled as a lead-in to the highly successful *Pardon The Interruption, Aroun The Horn* is also a confrontational-style bull session about the world of sports. B unlike *PTI,* there are five instead of two motormouths competing for face time, Ma and four sports columnists.

The concept, including the spiffy set, is designed to resemble a video game, wi Max in the studio and the columnists appearing on monitors, live from their respectiv newspapers. Max wields joysticks and bleep buttons as he fires questions at the pane and awards points to those whose opinions he likes. At the end of the game, the write with the most points gets more time than the rest for his closing comments.

While it might sound good on paper, the format is convoluted and confusing in practice. It all seems rather helter-skelter, with too much going on at the same time. Rather than coming away feeling like I'd seen a spirited debate, I felt like the ball bea ing in a pinball game.

Max gamely threw in a few boxing references during the first show, but there were no questions abou the Sweet Science. And I got the impression the panel was happy there weren't. Fight fans will be bette served getting their dose of Max where they always have, on Friday nights.

—Nigel Collin

DON GOES DOWN

PHOTO BY NASSER KHAN

Arum gets to smile wider than King now

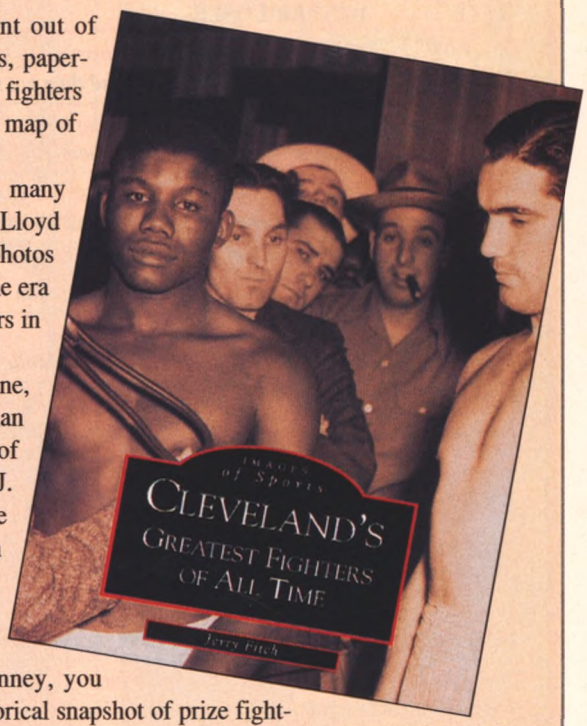
Promoter Bob Arum didn't necessarily score a kayo, but he may have inched close to it by registering a decision win over rival Don King in the latest bout in their ongoing grudge saga. On November 4, a six-member jury in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, rejected King's claims that Arum stole Julio Cesar Chavez from him in 1998, thereby preventing King from collecting the $8-million he was seeking in damages. Instead, King, who is widely believed to be in financial trouble and had to trim his staff recently, has to pay for his own legal bills as well as Arum's, to the tune of as much as $1-million.

"It ain't like he's not guilty," King said of Arum after a rare legal defeat. "It's that he got away with it."

What King insists Arum "got away with" is getting Chavez to fight twice under Arum's Top Rank banner while the Mexican great was still under contract to King, his promoter for most of his career. But the jury believed Arum's testimony that King's supposed contract extension with Chavez was forged.

"There was no question that we were correct, and King filed this frivolous suit because that's how he operates," Arum said. "He rolled the dice and tried to make a score."

THE BOXING BOOKSHELF



You don't have to be a Cleveland resident to wring some enjoyment out of *Cleveland's Greatest Fighters Of All-Time* (Arcadia Publishing, 128 pages, paperback, $19.99). It wouldn't hurt of course, since the book deals solely with fighters from that oft-maligned city. But even if you couldn't locate Cleveland on a map of Ohio, there are things to like about this small, casual study.

First and most impressively, are the photos—there are dozens of them, many that you've never seen before. Photos of Johnny Kilbane, Jack "Kid" Wolfe, Lloyd Marshall, Jimmy Bivins, Johnny Risko, and many others. They aren't the photos you'll see in any boxing encyclopedia or magazine. They capture perfectly the era when Cleveland was a fairly serviceable fight town and they show the fighters in all their gritty stoicism. The photos represent the strength of the work.

Author Jerry Fitch's treatment of Bivins, Marshall, Kilbane, Carl Tremaine, Risko, Joey Maxim, Paul Pirrone, and others is that of gushing fan rather than astute historian; he writes in first-person, rather an oddity for this type of work, and his prose is fairly simplistic. No one will confuse him with A.J. Liebling. Also, many of the book's 10 chapters are well-described as simple regurgitation of history, especially with the older subjects. To a degree, Fitch compensates for his lack of literary chops with anecdotes gleaned from his friendships with Bivins, Maxim, and George Pace. He gets points, too, for historical accuracy, a must with this type of work.

If you're looking for Norman Mailer or Nick Tosches or Jack McKinney, you might want to pass. But as a reference tool or, even more to the point, a historical snapshot of prize fighting in Cleveland, *Cleveland's Greatest Fighters Of All-Time* does the trick.

—William Dettloff

Stat freaks will love the *CompuBox Record Book 2002* (140 pages, paperback), a compendium of the punch stats compiled by Bob Canobbio and Logan Hobson, who co-founded the punch-counting company in 1985.

The stats you hear broadcasters quote during fights on HBO and ESPN are mere snippets compared to the overwhelming amount of data included here. Want to know the greatest number of punches thrown by one fighter in a 10-round bout? Easy. Kassim Ouma, who threw 1,331 in his September 2001 donnybrook with Verno Phillips. How about the largest number of combined punches landed in one round? Well, if you had a copy of the *CompuBox Record Book 2002*, you'd know that the answer is 144, landed by cruisers Dan Mack and Henry Monteguet in July '95.

The book is well-organized with a section of all-time stats up front, then a detailed breakdown, division-by-division. Each weight class lists the numbers for both fighters combined and individually. It also differentiates between jabs and powerpunches, just like on TV.

It should be noted that CompuBox does not work every fight on every network. Therefore, the records given only apply to bouts covered by CompuBox. So if you plan to use the book for settling boxing bets, be careful.

There's a bare minimum of commentary, but for those interested in this sort of stuff, it makes fascinating reading. It's the kind of book you can dip into for a few minutes or a few hours, and unearth all sort of esoteric nuggets of info. Here's one more to whet your appetite: Which middleweight holds the CompuBox record for punches connected in a single round? Give up? It was Mike McCallum, who connected with 74 shots vs. Nicky Walker back in '91.

You won't find the *CompuBox Record Book 2002* in stores, but you can purchase it mail order: CompuBox, P.O. Box 175, Manorville, NY 11949, or on-line at: compuboxonline.com. The cost is $39.95, plus $5 shipping and handling.

—Nigel Collins

TV FIGHTS OF THE MONTH

DATE	WINNER/LOSER	NETWORK	DIVISION	SIGNIFICANCE	MATCHUP	RESULT
10-11-02	**Wayne Braithwaite KO 10 Vincenzo Cantatore**	**ESPN2**	**WBC c**	**A-**	**B**	**B-**
If ever a guy needed a good knocking out and then got it, it was Cantatore						
10-11-02	Zahir Raheem KO 8 Luisito Espinosa	ESPN2	f	B-	B+	B
We're not sure yet about Raheem's chin, but there's no denying his speed						
10-12-02	**Eric Morel KO 11 Denkaosaen Kaowichit**	**Show**	**WBA fl**	**A**	**C+**	**B**
What a shame that we'll never see Morel against Ricardo Lopez						
10-12-02	Antonio Margarito W 12 Danny Perez	Show	w	A-	B+	C-
Their eight-rounder three years ago was a lot more fun						
10-13-02	Martin O'Malley W 10 Danny Rios	ESPN	l	C-	C+	C+
Unless he somehow finds some pop in his mitts, O'Malley's going to have a rough go of it						
10-13-02	Epifanio Mendoza KO 1 Tokunbo Olajide	ESPN	jm	B	B-	B+
Note to managers of undefeated prospects: Stay the hell away from tall, broad-shouldered Colombians						
10-13-02	Lance Whitaker KO 5 Cliff Couser	FOXSN	h	C+	B-	B-
Rocked in the second, Whitaker pounds Couser goofy						
10-18-02	Lawrence Clay-Bey KO 2 Sedreck Fields	ESPN2	h	C+	C	B
Clay-Bey spectacular against tough journeyman Fields; a shame that he lost so much time						
10-18-02	Joe Mesi KO 9 David Izon	ESPN2	h	C+	C+	C
Izon could not be more shot if he were Livingstone Bramble						
10-19-02	Juan Diaz KO 6 Roy Delgado	Show	l	C	A-	C+
Delgado made this interesting early; credit Diaz for wearing him down						
10-19-02	Rocky Juarez W 10 Hector Acero-Sanchez	Show	f	C+	B+	C-
Still slippery Acero-Sanchez interesting test for Juarez; he passed it						
10-19-02	**Vivian Harris KO 2 Diobelys Hurtado**	**Show**	**WBA jw**	**A-**	**A**	**B**
More proof that junior welter is the best and most interesting division in the game						
10-25-02	Leavander Johnson W 12 Julian Wheeler	ESPN2	l	C+	B+	D+
This might have been fun if one of these guys had taken a chance or two						
10-27-02	Angel Chacon W 12 John Michael Johnson	ESPN	f	C+	B+	B-
2001 Comeback Fighter of the Year Johnson is coming back down in a hurry						
10-27-02	Javier Jauregui W 12 Alex Trujillo	ESPN	l	C+	A-	A-
Tough-as-nails Jauregui hands Trujillo first loss in outstanding slugfest						
11-1-02	Cesar Bazan KO 4 Joshua Smith	Telef	w	C+	C-	C+
Bazan returns from layoff with easy win; Miguel Cotto up next						
11-1-02	Arnulfo Castillo D 10 Arturo Urena	Telef	jl	C+	B+	A
Ward and Gatti have nothing on these guys						
11-1-02	**Oscar Larios KO 1 Willie Jorrin**	**ESPN2**	**WBC jf**	**A**	**B+**	**B**
You knew this was going to happen eventually, even if the stoppage was a little quick						
11-2-02	Ricardo Williams W 10 Terronn Millett	HBO	w	B	B	C-
For those of you keeping score at home, it was seven times that George Foreman called Millett "mullet"						
11-2-02	**Marco Antonio Barrera W 12 Johnny Tapia**	**HBO**	**World f**	**A+**	**B**	**B-**
Whether we like it or not, the transformation is complete: Barrera is a boxer now, not a puncher						
11-3-02	Montell Griffin W 12 George Jones	FOXSN	lh	B	B	B
Griffin edges Jones in surprisingly competitive match; more a step back than forward for Griffin						

Category Explanation: "Significance"—The importance of the bout to the division and the fighters' futures; "Matchup"—The quality of the fighters and the prefight determination of how their styles will mesh; "Result"—How the bout turned out, from the viewer's perspective.

(World/Alphabet title fights in **bold** type)

Division key: h—heavyweight; c—cruiserweight; lh—light heavyweight; sm—super middleweight; m—middleweight; jm—junior middleweight; w—welterweight; jw—junior welterweight; l—lightweight; jl—junior lightweight; f—featherweight; jf—junior featherweight; b—bantamweight; jb—junior bantamweight; fl—flyweight; jfl—junior flyweight; s—strawweight

Network key: PPV—Pay-Per-View; Show—Showtime; FOXSN—Fox SportsNet; Uni—Univision; Telef—Telefutura; Telem—Telemundo

CAN FELDMAN FILL PHILLY'S VOID?

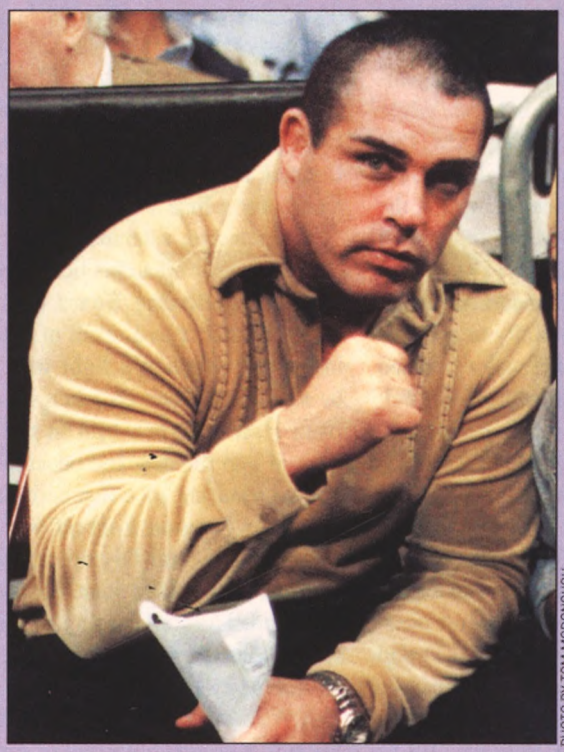


PHOTO BY TOM MCDONOUGH

Feldman's graduating beyond gimmicks

Judging from Damon Feldman's first few years as a promoter, you never would have thought the former fighter would have even the slightest chance of becoming the savior of Philadelphia boxing. Since his first card in 1997, Feldman, best known for wearing a Don King wig around town while promoting his shows, got by primarily on gimmickry, drawing enthusiastic clubfight crowds with everything from bikini contests to fights featuring 500-pound pro wrestlers.

But in recent months, Feldman has taken serious steps toward legitimacy. On May 17, his first fight card at the First Union Spectrum combined shtick with world-class pugilism, as middleweight champion Bernard Hopkins headlined in an exhibition bout against Toughman heavyweight Brandon Sheffield. And on October 11, Feldman returned to the Spectrum with a 10-round main event between former lightweight title challenger Ivan Robinson and Charles "Chucky T" Tschorniawsky, a meaningful local fight that drew more than 4,400 fans.

"I want to get Philly back to the reputation it had in the '70s, when you could go out and see great fights at the Spectrum on a regular basis," said Feldman, who went 9-0 (4) during his brief career as a middleweight in the late-'80s and early-'90s. "We're just going to keep building the thing up. Eventually, [local cable-TV provider] Comcast is going to start televising the shows. I know I have a reputation for using gimmicks, but now I'm looking to do bigger, better, and more serious shows. What I really want is great, action-packed fights. I want to make Philadelphia the biggest fight town again."

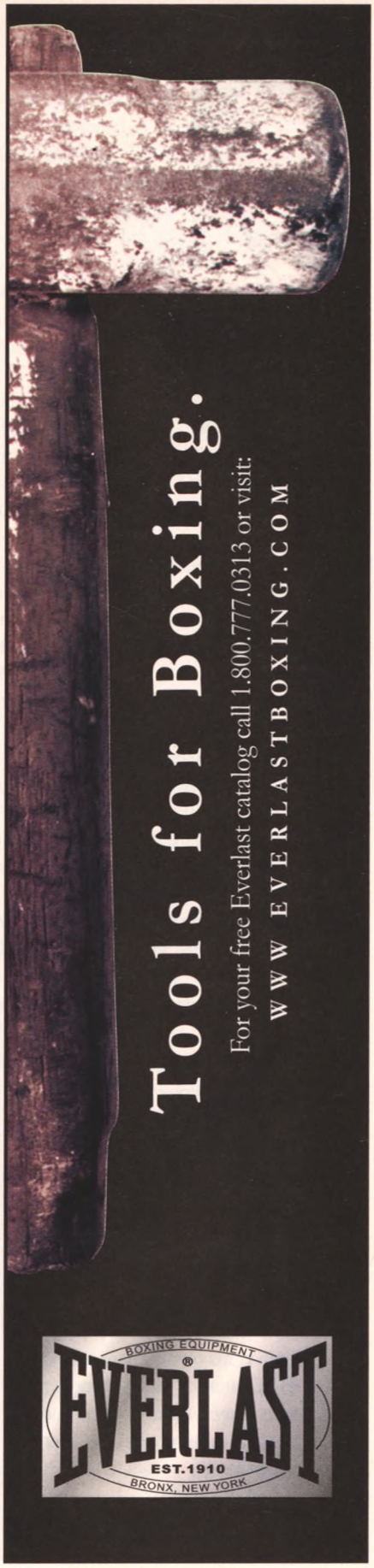
Feldman, 33, also promotes pro wrestling and Toughman competitions and owns a boxing gym/wrestling school in Broomall, Pennsylvania. But he says making it as a boxing promoter is his first priority. J Russell Peltz, who promoted Feldman in his fighting days and co-promoted the October 11 show with him, thinks he has a good chance.

"He's young and enthusiastic, he's tireless, and I think he'll succeed," said Peltz. "It was a pleasure working with Damon because he does all the running around and banging the drums that I don't like to do. And everybody made a little bit of money—I did, Damon did, the Spectrum did.

"Do I think he can draw 7,000 or 8,000 every month like we did in the '70s? No, I don't think that'll ever happen in any major city. No city has the fighters. But if he does four shows a year, he can keep getting 5,000 people."

Those aren't quite Don King numbers, but they're a lot closer than Feldman ever came by trying to look like DK.

—Eric Raskin



OUTSIDE THE ROPES

Pendleton: Journeyman-turned-champ retires

Fernando Vargas told the Nevada State Athletic Commission what they wanted to hear, but it remained to be seen as of press time how that might affect his punishment for his positive steroid test. While Vargas insisted in a letter to the NSAC that he did not knowingly take any illegal substances, he accepted responsibility for the positive test following his September 14 fight with **Oscar De La Hoya** at Mandalay Bay, and did not dispute the test results. A hearing in which Vargas would have an opportunity to state his case in front of a five-person commission panel was scheduled for November 20 ... Former heavyweight champion **Riddick Bowe** appears likely to do jail time for a crime he already thought was behind him. A federal appeals court ruled in late-October that Bowe was improperly sentenced for the 1998 kidnapping of his wife and five children. "Big Daddy" had been given a lenient sentence in '00 after lawyer **Johnnie Cochrane** argued that Bowe was suffering from diminished mental capacity due to boxing injuries, but unless the Supreme Court overturns this latest ruling, Bowe will soon be re-sentenced to up to two years in prison ... Former IBF lightweight titlist **Freddie Pendleton** announced his retirement in late-September at the age of 39. Pendleton, who reigned from January '93 to February '94, finished with a record of 47-26-5 (35) over a 20-year career ... **Don King** isn't the only promoter experiencing financial difficulties. **Cedric Kushner's** company, Zenascent, revealed in its quarterly report to the Securities and Exchange Commission that it lost $1.9-million over the three months ending June 30. Kushner suffered another blow in October when one of his former fighters, **Buster Mathis Jr.**, received a $650,000 judgment in court from Kushner over what he said was a shortchanged purse for his '95 fight with **Mike Tyson** ... Another promotional company, **Sugar Ray Leonard** Boxing, also came under fire recently. SRL was sued for breach of contract by the Myrtle Beach (South Carolina) Area Sports Council, accused of taking $75,000 in front money for a June 7 event, then backing out ... As expected, veteran manager and trainer **Darkie Smith** had his license revoked by the British Boxing Board of Control in early-November as a result of his conduct several weeks earlier in his son **Stephen's** fight with **Ricky Hatton**. Stephen was being soundly beaten when an apparently accidental elbow from Hatton struck him in the second round. Darkie then jumped into the ring and became physical with referee Mickey **Vann**, resulting in a disqualification ... World welterweight champion **Vernon Forrest** was named honorary captain for Georgia's Special Olympics delegation headed to the 2003 Summer Games next June. Forrest, as many fans already know, is the president of Destiny's Child, a group home service for mentally challenged individuals ... **Micky Ward** is also due to be honored. The Massachusetts slugger will receive the first **Ted Williams** Globe & Anchor Award from the Semper Fidelis Society, a group comprised of former U.S. Marines. The award is for a non-Marine who exemplifies the same commitment to excellence that baseball great Williams was famous for during his life ... **Lennox Lewis'** amateur boxing coach, Arnie **Boehm**, died of a heart attack in early-October at the age of 68. The Ontario-based Boehm lived long enough to see what he called his "crowning achievement," when Lewis knocked out Tyson in June. Boehm had trained Lewis from the age of 12 until the Englishman turned pro.

Kushner: Promoter on the ropes

THE PUNCHLINES

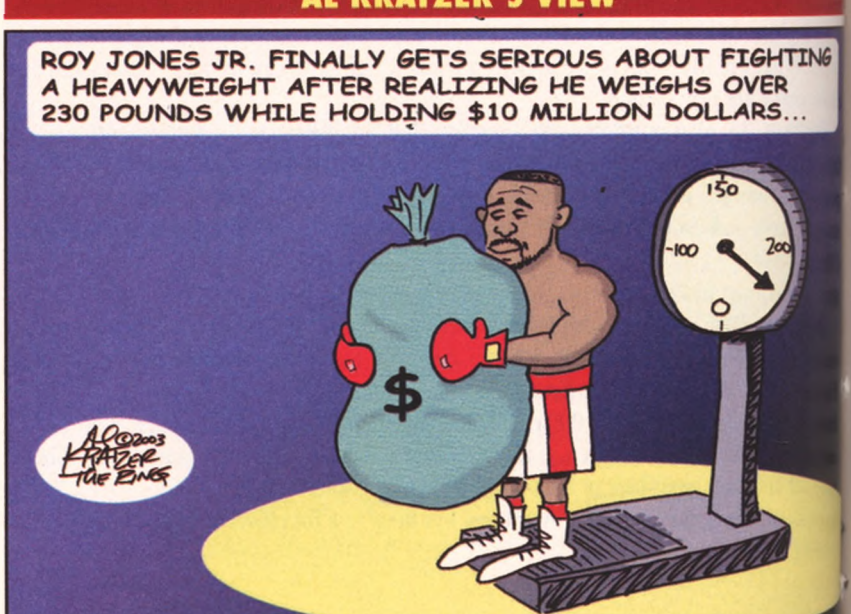
"It's time to stop fishing and start fighting."

—Anthony Cardinale, attorney for John Ruiz, trying to convince Roy Jones to finalize the fight contracts

"Tapia is his own rally monkey."

—HBO analyst Larry Merchant, as Johnny Tapia tried to get himself back into the fight against Marco Antonio Barrera

AL KRATZER'S VIEW



"THE BIBLE OF BOXING"

RATINGS ANALYSIS

(For period ended November 4, 2002)

POUND-FOR-POUND

1. **BERNARD HOPKINS** Middleweight
2. **ROY JONES** Light Heavyweight
3. **MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA** Featherweight
4. **VERNON FORREST** Welterweight
5. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA** Junior Middleweight
6. **KOSTYA TSZYU** Junior Welterweight
7. **FLOYD MAYWEATHER** Lightweight
8. **LENNOX LEWIS** Heavyweight
9. **ERIK MORALES** Featherweight
10. **SHANE MOSLEY** Junior Middleweight

HEAVYWEIGHTS: No changes.

CRUISERWEIGHTS: No changes.

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS: Julio Gonzalez (eighth last issue) and David Telesco (seventh last issue) change places due to Gonzalez' greater activity.

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS: Busy Anthony Mundine advances from 10th to ninth following a knockout win over Ricky Thornberry, while Markus Beyer slips from ninth to 10th.

MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS: No changes.

WELTERWEIGHTS: Danny Perez falls from ninth to 10th following his points loss to Antonio Margarito, who stays put at number two. Jawaid Khaliq (10th last issue) advances into Perez' old spot.

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS: Vivian Harris crashes the ratings at number five on the strength of his second-round blowout of Diobelys Hurtado, who previously held that position. Hurtado plummets to number 10. Omar Weis (10th last issue) departs.

LIGHTWEIGHTS: No changes.

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS: Cassius Baloyi's knockout of Mbulelo Botile moves Baloyi up from ninth to eighth. Baloyi's advancement pushes Carlos Hernandez down from eighth to ninth.

FEATHERWEIGHTS: Johnny Tapia (fourth last issue) falls to sixth due to his wide decision loss to world champion Marco Antonio Barrera. Tapia's demotion allows Juan Manuel Marquez (fifth last issue) and Derrick Gainer (sixth last issue) to improve to fourth and fifth, respectively. Scott Harrison debuts at number eight thanks to his decision over Julio Pablo Chacon (eighth last issue). Chacon exits.

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS: Oscar Larios (third last issue) jumps to number two following his kayo of Willie Jorrin, who falls from fourth to seventh. Larios' progress shoves Bones Adams down one spot, from second to third. Salim Medjkoune is newly aboard at number four due to his win over Osamu Sato, who drops from fifth to 10th. Yoddamrong Sithyodthong (sixth last issue) is gone due to an earlier loss to Sato.

BANTAMWEIGHTS: Heriberto Ruiz (seventh last issue) departs after losing to unranked journeyman Oscar Andrade. This pushes Cruz Carbajal, Toshiaki Nishioka, and Pete Frissina up one slot each, and makes room for Silence Mabuza at number 10.

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS: No changes.

FLYWEIGHTS: Eric Morel (second last issue) reclaims the number-one position due to his impressive win over Denkaosaen Kaowichit. Pongsaklek Wonjongkam (first last issue) slips to number two.

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS: Now that Ricardo Lopez (first last issue) has announced his retirement, everybody below him last issue moves up, making Rosendo Alvarez the new number-one contender. Alvarez is scheduled to fight a rubber match with Bebis Mendoza (currently number three), and THE RING will recognize the winner as the new 108-pound world champion.

STRAWWEIGHTS: Juan Palacios lost a split decision to Jose Antonio Aguirre (currently number one) and is therefore installed at number 10, pushing Khulile Makeba (10th last issue) out of the rankings.

POUND-FOR-POUND: No changes.■

THE RING RATINGS

For Period Ended November 4, 2002

PHOTO BY SUMIO YAMADA

Salim Medjkoune's win over Osamu Sato moved him into the junior feather ratings at number four

How Our Ratings Are Compiled

Fighters recognized as champions by THE RING are rated at the top of their division, with the top 10 contenders listed below.

Championship vacancies can be filled in one of two ways: by unifying all three alphabet titles in a division; or by winning a box-off between THE RING'S number-one and number-two contenders, or, in certain instances, a box-off between our number-one and number-three contenders.

The only three occasions when a fighter will lose his championship status are when he retires, moves to another weight division, or is defeated in a championship bout.

Ratings By The Editors
Records By Fight Fax Inc.

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Unlimited

Champ: LENNOX LEWIS
England 40-2-1 (31)

1. **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO**
Ukraine 39-1 (36)
2. **CHRIS BYRD**
Flint, MI 35-2 (20)
3. **EVANDER HOLYFIELD**
Fairburn, GA 38-5-2 (25)
4. **DAVID TUA**
New Zealand 41-3 (36)
5. **JOHN RUIZ**
Chelsea, MA 38-4-1 (27)
6. **JAMEEL McCLINE**
Port Jefferson, NY 28-2-3 (16)
7. **HASIM RAHMAN**
Baltimore, MD 35-4 (29)
8. **KIRK JOHNSON**
Canada 32-1-1 (23)
9. **MIKE TYSON**
Catskill, NY 49-4 (43)
10. **VITALI KLITSCHKO**
Ukraine 31-1 (30)

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 154 pounds

Champ: OSCAR DE LA HOYA
Los Angeles, CA 35-2 (28)

1. **WINKY WRIGHT**
St. Petersburg, FL 44-3 (25)
2. **FERNANDO VARGAS**
Oxnard, CA 22-2 (20)
3. **JAVIER CASTILLEJO**
Spain 54-5 (36)
4. **DANIEL SANTOS**
Puerto Rico 26-2-1 (20)
5. **SHANE MOSLEY**
Pomona, CA 38-2 (35)
6. **KASSIM OUMA**
W. Palm Beach, FL 17-1-1 (12)
7. **BRONCO McKART**
Monroe, MI 45-4 (29)
8. **ALEX BUNEMA**
Dallas, TX 20-3-2 (12)
9. **VERNO PHILLIPS**
Aurora, CO 33-8-1 (18)
10. **SANTIAGO SAMANIEGO**
Panama 36-6-1 (29)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 126 pounds

Champ: MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA
Mexico 56-3 (39)

1. **ERIK MORALES**
Mexico 41-1 (31)
2. **NASEEM HAMED**
England 36-1 (31)
3. **MANUEL MEDINA**
Mexico 60-12 (27)
4. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**
Mexico 39-2 (31)
5. **DERRICK GAINER**
Pensacola, FL 38-5-1 (24)
6. **JOHNNY TAPIA**
Albuquerque, NM 52-3-2 (28)
7. **FRANKIE TOLEDO**
Paterson, NJ 42-6-1 (17)
8. **SCOTT HARRISON**
Scotland 18-1-1 (9)
9. **LEHLO LEDWABA**
South Africa 33-2-1 (22)
10. **WILLIAM ABELYAN**
Glendale, CA 21-4-1 (11)

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 122 pounds

Champ: PAULIE AYALA
Ft. Worth, TX 34-1 (12)

1. **MANNY PACQUIAO**
Philippines 35-2-1 (26)
2. **OSCAR LARIOS**
Mexico 46-3-1 (33)
3. **BONES ADAMS**
Henderson, KY 41-5-3 (19)
4. **SALIM MEDJKOUNE**
France 40-3-1 (21)
5. **ENRIQUE SANCHEZ**
Mexico 30-2-2 (21)
6. **ISRAEL VAZQUEZ**
Mexico 33-3 (24)
7. **WILLIE JORRIN**
Sacramento, CA 28-1-1 (12)
8. **JOSE LUIS VALBUENA**
Venezuela 21-2-1 (12)
9. **JOAN GUZMAN**
Dominican Republic 18-0 (14)
10. **OSAMU SATO**
Japan 26-2-2 (15)

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 118 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **TIM AUSTIN**
Cincinnati, OH 25-0-1 (22)
2. **VEERAPOL SAHAPROM**
Thailand 39-1-1 (28)
3. **JOHNNY BREDAHL**
Denmark 52-2 (26)
4. **RAFAEL MARQUEZ**
Mexico 28-3 (26)
5. **EIDY MOYA**
Venezuela 15-2 (8)
6. **ADAN VARGAS**
Mexico 37-4-1 (23)
7. **CRUZ CARBAJAL**
Mexico 22-11-1 (18)
8. **TOSHIAKI NISHIOKA**
Japan 22-3-2 (13)
9. **PETE FRISSINA**
Tarpon Springs, FL 26-3-1 (15)
10. **SILENCE MABUZA**
South Africa 12-0 (11)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 190 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **VASSILIY JIROV** Kazakhstan 31-0 (27)
2. **JOHNNY NELSON** England 42-12-1 (28)
3. **JEAN-MARC MORMECK** France 28-2 (20)
4. **WAYNE BRAITHWAITE** Guyana 18-0 (15)
5. **JAMES TONEY** Ann Arbor, MI 65-4-2 (42)
6. **EZRA SELLERS** Washington, D.C. 25-5 (23)
7. **O'NEIL BELL** Atlanta, GA 18-1-1 (17)
8. **VIRGIL HILL** Bismarck, ND 47-4 (23)
9. **ALEXANDRE GUROV** Ukraine 32-3-1 (27)
10. **JORGE CASTRO** Argentina 120-8-3 (84)

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 175 pounds

Champ: ROY JONES Pensacola, FL 47-1 (38)

1. **ANTONIO TARVER** Orlando, FL 20-1 (17)
2. **DARIUSZ MICHALCZEWSKI** Germany 47-0 (37)
3. **ERIC HARDING** Philadephia, PA 21-2-1 (7)
4. **MONTELL GRIFFIN** Chicago, IL 44-3 (29)
5. **REGGIE JOHNSON** Houston, TX 42-7-1 (24)
6. **BRUNO GIRARD** France 42-2-2 (7)
7. **JULIO GONZALEZ** Huntington Beach, CA 31-1 (21)
8. **DAVID TELESCO** Port Chester, NY 26-3 (21)
9. **LOU DEL VALLE** Bronx, NY 31-3-1 (21)
10. **GEORGE JONES** Paterson, NJ 18-2 (13)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 168 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **JOE CALZAGHE** Wales 34-0 (27)
2. **SVEN OTTKE** Germany 28-0 (6)
3. **ANTWUN ECHOLS** Davenport, IA 29-4-1 (26)
4. **ERIC LUCAS** Canada 36-4-3 (13)
5. **BYRON MITCHELL** Ozark, AL 25-1-1 (18)
6. **CHARLES BREWER** Philadelphia, PA 38-9 (27)
7. **MADS LARSEN** Denmark 42-1 (36)
8. **MANUEL SIACA** Puerto Rico 16-4 (15)
9. **ANTHONY MUNDINE** Australia 16-1 (13)
10. **MARKUS BEYER** Germany 26-1 (11)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 160 pounds

Champ: BERNARD HOPKINS Philadelphia, PA 41-2-1 (30)

1. **HARRY SIMON** Namibia 23-0 (17)
2. **WILLIAM JOPPY** Washington, D.C. 34-2-1 (25)
3. **HOWARD EASTMAN** England 33-1 (30)
4. **ANTONIO PERUGINO** Italy 21-0 (7)
5. **ROBERT ALLEN** Atlanta, GA 33-4 (24)
6. **TITO MENDOZA** Panama 27-4 (20)
7. **SERGEY TATEVOSYAN** Russia 16-3 (12)
8. **HASSINE CHERIFI** France 33-6-1 (20)
9. **RODNEY JONES** Lafayette, LA 26-3 (16)
10. **ERLAND BETARE** France 35-7-2 (16)

WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 147 pounds

Champ: VERNON FORREST Atlanta, GA 35-0 (26)

1. **RICARDO MAYORGA** Nicaragua 24-3-1 (22)
2. **ANTONIO MARGARITO** Mexico 27-3 (18)
3. **THOMAS DAMGAARD** Denmark 31-0 (25)
4. **ANDREW LEWIS** Guyana 21-1-1 (19)
5. **ANTONIO DIAZ** Coachella, CA 37-4 (26)
6. **MANUEL GOMEZ** Mexico 21-10 (16)
7. **CORY SPINKS** St. Louis, MO 30-2 (11)
8. **MICHELE PICCIRILLO** Italy 37-1 (23)
9. **JAWAID KHALIQ** England 19-1-1 (12)
10. **DANNY PEREZ** El Cajon, CA 27-3 (17)

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 140 pounds

Champ: KOSTYA TSZYU Australia 29-1-1 (23)

1. **SHARMBA MITCHELL** Washington, D.C. 49-3 (29)
2. **ZAB JUDAH** Brooklyn, NY 28-1 (21)
3. **DeMARCUS CORLEY** Washington, D.C. 27-1-1 (16)
4. **MICKY WARD** Lowell, MA 38-11 (27)
5. **VIVIAN HARRIS** Brooklyn, NY 22-1-1 (16)
6. **ARTURO GATTI** Jersey City, NJ 34-6 (28)
7. **JESSE JAMES LEIJA** San Antonio, TX 43-5-2 (17)
8. **OKTAY URKAL** Germany 31-1 (10)
9. **BEN TACKIE** Ghana 24-3 (15)
10. **DIOBELYS HURTADO** Miami, FL 35-3-1 (23)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 135 pounds

Champ: FLOYD MAYWEATHER Grand Rapids, MI 28-0 (20)

1. **JOSE LUIS CASTILLO** Mexico 46-5-1 (42)
2. **STEVE JOHNSTON** Denver, CO 34-2-1 (16)
3. **PAUL SPADAFORA** Pittsburgh, PA 35-0 (14)
4. **LEONARD DORIN** Canada 21-0 (7)
5. **JUAN LAZCANO** El Paso, TX 31-2-1 (24)
6. **ANGEL MANFREDY** Gary, IN 40-6-1 (29)
7. **ARTUR GRIGORIAN** Uzbekistan 35-0 (22)
8. **RAUL BALBI** France 48-6-1 (33)
9. **ALEJANDRO GONZALEZ** Mexico 48-5-1 (33)
10. **COLIN DUNNE** England 38-1 (26)

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 130 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **ACELINO FREITAS** Brazil 32-0 (29)
2. **JOEL CASAMAYOR** Miami, FL 27-1 (17)
3. **JESUS CHAVEZ** Mexico 37-2 (26)
4. **STEVE FORBES** Las Vegas, NV 21-1 (5)
5. **YODSANAN NANTHACHAI** Thailand 36-2-1 (33)
6. **PHILLIP NDOU** South Africa 28-1 (27)
7. **SIRIMONGKOL SINGMANASSAK** Thailand 39-1 (23)
8. **CASSIUS BALOYI** South Africa 28-1 (16)
9. **CARLOS HERNANDEZ** Bellflower, CA 37-3-1 (23)
10. **NATE CAMPBELL** Jacksonville, FL 22-0 (20)

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 115 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **MASAMORI TOKUYAMA** North Korea 27-2-1 (8)
2. **ALEXANDER MUNOZ** Venezuela 23-0 (23)
3. **FERNANDO MONTIEL** Mexico 24-0-1 (18)
4. **FELIX MACHADO** Venezuela 22-3-1 (11)
5. **GERRY PENALOSA** Philippines 46-4-2 (31)
6. **MARTIN CASTILLO** Mexico 21-1 (13)
7. **JESUS ROJAS** Venezuela 35-9-3 (19)
8. **MAURICIO PASTRANA** Colombia 28-3-1 (18)
9. **IN JOO CHO** Korea 18-2 (7)
10. **LUIS BOLANO** Colombia 36-0 (28)

FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 112 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **ERIC MOREL** Madison, WI 32-0 (18)
2. **PONGSAKLEK WONJONGKAM** Thailand 45-2 (25)
3. **IRENE PACHECO** Colombia 26-0 (20)
4. **MZUKISI SIKALI** South Africa 27-4-2 (16)
5. **HAWK MAKEPULA** South Africa 20-2 (13)
6. **SAEN SOR PLOENCHIT** Thailand 42-1 (14)
7. **MALCOLM TUNACAO** Philippines 12-1-2 (8)
8. **PETER CULSHAW** England 22-1-1 (12)
9. **GERSON GUERRERO** Mexico 25-4 (19)
10. **OMAR NARVAEZ** Argentina 12-0-1 (7)

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 108 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **ROSENDO ALVAREZ** Nicaragua 31-2-1 (20)
2. **JORGE ARCE** Mexico 30-3-1 (22)
3. **BEBIS MENDOZA** Colombia 28-1 (23)
4. **PICHIT SIRIWAT** Thailand 25-2 (12)
5. **NELSON DIEPPA** Puerto Rico 19-2-2 (11)
6. **YOSAM CHOI** South Korea 24-2 (13)
7. **HIDENOBU HONDA** Japan 24-1 (12)
8. **MELCHOR COB CASTRO** Mexico 66-8-4 (30)
9. **ZOLANI PETELO** South Africa 17-3-2 (9)
10. **WENDYL JANIOLA** Philippines 11-0 (3)

STRAWWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 105 pounds

Champ: Vacant

1. **JOSE AGUIRRE** Mexico 28-1-1 (17)
2. **MIGUEL BARRERA** Colombia 19-0-2 (11)
3. **ROBERTO LEYVA** Mexico 21-1-1 (18)
4. **CHANA PORPAOIN** Thailand 48-2-2 (17)
5. **NOEL ARAMBULET** Venezuela 18-2-1 (10)
6. **KEITARO HOSHINO** Japan 22-8 (5)
7. **JOMA GAMBOA** Philippines 31-7-2 (22)
8. **DANIEL REYES** Colombia 28-1 (22)
9. **KERMIN GUARDIA** Colombia 33-2 (20)
10. **JUAN PALACIOS** Nicaragua 10-2 (8)

RYAN OUT LOUD

By Jeff Ryan

HEAVY DUTY DILEMMA

Roy Jones' interest in facing a world-class heavyweight has always been more curiosity th burning desire. When it comes to his work, we have learned that, much to our frustrati Jones has no burning desire to do anything. He's about as spontaneous as a State of t Union Address, forever analyzing, re-analyzing, and overanalyzing every career move he w might, or could make. Heck, during much of his light heavyweight reign, Jones has done ever thing short of hiring a focus group and passing out questionnaires before deciding which outclass challenger to beat up next.

Because Jones has never been keen on squaring off with Dariusz Michalczewski, and becaus rematch with Bernard Hopkins often seemed like a longshot to unfold, this columnist once thoug it would be a great idea for Jones to add 20 or 25 pounds and take a crack at heavyweight. My re soning was simple: With the exceptions of Michalczewski and Hopkins, there's no one betwe 160 and 190 pounds who could climb through the ropes with Jones and make me think they'd ev have a chance of upending him.

Of course, my opinion has wavered over the last couple of years. On his best nights, Jones l looked as though he'd be way too fast for a heavyweight, or, more specifically, the toothless tig heavyweight that Team Jones would be sure to select for him. However, on those nights wh Jones couldn't hurt his opponent and seemed downright bored with the job of having to thro punches for 36 whole minutes, t thought of him leaving the cus 175-pound kingdom to tangle wi a naturally bigger guy (even o short on skills) seemed risky.

That Jones and Co. targete WBA heavyweight titlist Joh Ruiz during their latest will-he-o won't-he flirtation with the heav weight ranks comes as no surpri "The Quiet Man" owns an alph bet strap, he's lumbering and ea to hit, he didn't even look th great on his best day (while ou pointing Evander Holyfield in th second of their three showdown and he got stopped in only 19 se onds on his worst (vs. David Tu On top of that, Ruiz isn't infam dating in any way. He's never tri to choke a referee, bite off an ea or fling a ring stool. He doesn thrive on trash talk, and he's n threat to land a cheap shot on hi rival during a photo session

PHOTO BY TOM HOGAN

If Roy beats Ruiz, can he go back to toying with mediocre light heavies?

ress conference. The Quiet lan, indeed.

And yet, battling Ruiz now eems like one of the more nwise things Jones could ever o before that day comes when e backpedals into the sunset ith his hands at his waist. The roblem for the future Hall of amer—and maybe his camp ealizes this—is that beating a uiz would be nearly as prob- ematic for Jones' career as illing to him would be. It's a se-lose proposition.

The fallout from a potential ones defeat is easy to imagine. A loss would instantly strip him f his aura of invincibility, no matter that it came in his initial uting in a new division and against a guy weighing 50 ounds more than his previous e. It would ruin Jones' perfect ecord. (Yes, his *perfect* record. That disqualification loss to Montell Griffin in 1997 shouldn't be taken seriously by anyone.) If the safety-conscious Jones was kayoed or beaten badly en route o dropping a decision, it might even make him retire.

And though it would hardly be fair, considering his utter brilliance and complete dominance at 175 pounds, the defeat would undoubtedly haunt his legacy. Whenever Jones' name was mentioned, his failure at heavyweight would surely come to mind. After all, is Billy Conn best known for his light heavyweight reign? Or his foolish decision to stand and slug with Joe Louis in a try for the heavyweight crown? Find me a more famous photo of Archie Moore than the one depicting him crumbling at Rocky Marciano's feet. Can you think of Bob Foster and not think of the clobbering he received from Muhammad Ali and Joe Frazier? At least Conn, Moore, and Foster fell to immortals. How kind would the historians be to Jones if he got his butt kicked by Ruiz, a guy THE RING believes is only the sixth-best heavyweight?

As for what would happen if Jones ever fought Ruiz and lifted his WBA title, well, Jones would quickly find out that the victory didn't mean a whole hell of a lot, either short-term or long-term. Beating Ruiz wouldn't exactly make Jones the Michael Spinks of his day. When Spinks became the first light heavyweight champ to dethrone a heavyweight king, in 1985, he was facing not an alphabet pretender but an established linear champion who was making his 21st defense and attempting to equal Marciano's mark of 49-0.

The closest Jones could come to repeating Spinks' feat would be upsetting Lennox Lewis. And you'll surely never see Jones anywhere near the same ring as Lewis unless they're both wearing neckties and being introduced to the crowd before, say, an Oscar De La Hoya fight. If Jones ever did find himself on an alphabet heavyweight throne, he'd be faced with the dilemma of what to do next. Defend? Don't count on it. Styles make fights. And who's to say that Jones could beat a Chris Byrd or Jameel McCline, or even a strong, natural heavyweight who's ranked near the *bottom* of the top 20, let alone the elite corps of Wladimir Klitschko, Evander Holyfield, and Tua?

Even in his best fight against Holyfield, Ruiz wasn't all that impressive

So the likely course of action would be a drop down to cruiserweight or a return to light heavyweight. But how appealing would that be? Jones has enough trouble getting motivated for the 175-pounders who challenge him now. How psyched would former "heavyweight champion" Jones be to take on the Clinton Woodses and Glen Kellys? You don't see actors who get their start on TV sitcoms, Sally Field for instance, returning full-time to the small screen after winning an Academy Award. Once you've captured your industry's biggest prize (in the case of the WBA heavyweight crown, it would be *one* of boxing's biggest prizes), why would you want to go backward?

Moving up from light heavyweight and capturing a version of the heavyweight title sounds impressive, but if it's a one-shot deal for just a piece of the title, it's not going to make anyone have to feed all those old record books to the paper shredder. For Jones, a win over Ruiz and an immediate retreat from the heavyweight class would be no more impressive than when Sugar Ray Leonard beat Ayub Kalule and Pernell Whitaker turned back Julio Cesar Vasquez to win alphabet junior middleweight belts. Nobody cared.

Surely, a lot of these thoughts were going through Jones' mind during this autumn as he struggled to decide what course of action to plot. If only things could have instead played out the way most of us had hoped: Jones-Hopkins II at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas, with the winner to lay claim to the title of best fighter, pound-for-pound, in the world.

And yes, Roy, "best fighter, pound-for-pound," includes all the heavyweights, too. ■

DIGGING DEEP

By Ivan Goldman

JONES GETS IT WRONG

When it suits him, the immensely talented Roy Jones likes to hunker down out of sight and make himself curiously but emphatically unreachable. This can go on for long stretches, especially after he's created curiosity by naming someone he may or may not decide to fight.

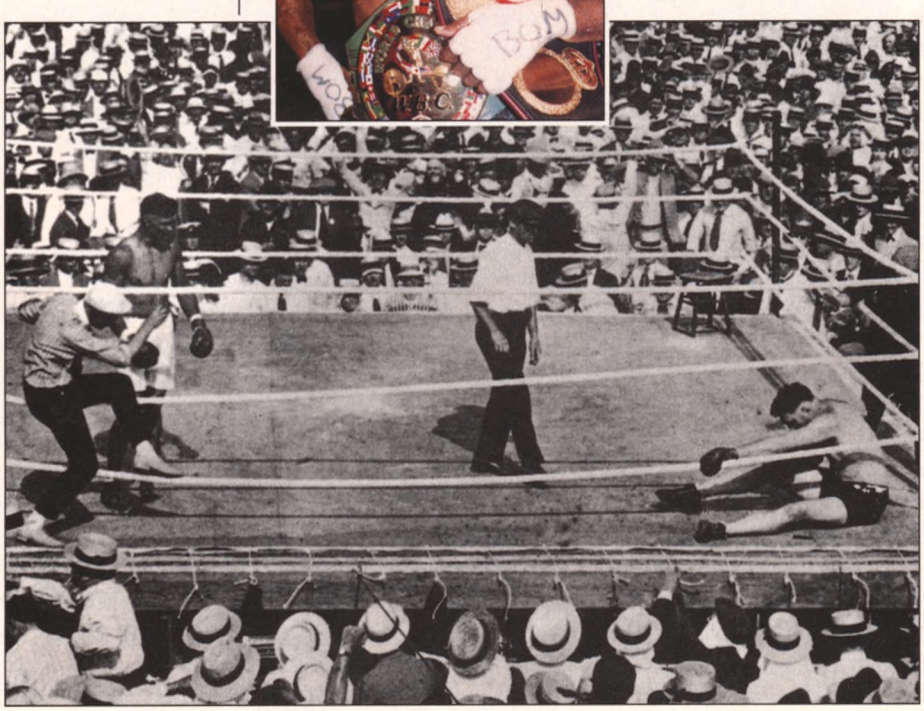
While he's underground, every once in a while we hear from someone who spoke to him, someone who spoke to someone else who spoke to him. And from these often conflicting, scattered clues and statements we all try to interpret what Jones is thinking, what he might do next.

Jones is the kind of guy who could spend an hour in a store deciding between two sports coats then leave without making a purchase.

When, ultimately, he pokes his nose out of his hole, Jones tends to frustrate us even more by babbling incoherently, always about himself. Even as he divulges information, he creates new questions, different puzzles.

During one such sighting, as he surveyed his opponent possibilities, he likened his decision to a battlefield decision. His risks are similar to those faced by soldiers, he said. So he must consider carefully. Well, that's his take on it.

When the great, poetic sportswriter Grantland Rice was set to cover Jack Dempsey's historic match with Jess Willard in 1919, he made similar comparisons, but not in a way that flatters Jones.



Maybe Jones (inset) can learn something from the Dempsey-Willard massacre

Here is what Rice, recently returned from the bloody battlefields of France in World War I, told Ring Lardner. Lardner wrote it down, and later Roger Kahn found it worth repeating in his magnetic book, *A Flame Of Pure Fire: Jack Dempsey And The Roaring Twenties*.

"I covered the Battle of the Argonne Forest," Rice said. "Forty thousand American soldiers died there and only 4 newspapermen covered the slaughter, which was as much as I hope I ever have to see of hell.

"Now we have a couple brawlers getting ready for a fight and we have six hundred reporters cheering them on like heroes here in Toledo. It doesn't make sense, Ring."

By all accounts, Rice, like wise people everywhere, was an exceedingly kind man. And the more famous he became, the kinder he got. He rarely had anything negative to say about anyone. But this was one of those rare instances that he felt pure disgust for someone—with all of mankind, really, and particularly with himself. It bothered him that he, too, was excited by the prospect of Dempsey vs. Willard—too excited, he thought.

Dempsey was a fierce mover, very scientific for his time, who weighed in at 187 pounds, about Jones' size. Willard was a hulking slugger, bigger than John Ruiz. At 245 pounds, he was almost 60 pounds bigger than Dempsey. Sound familiar?

It's the kind of fight that carries a true sense of mystery, awakening not just interest, but also imagination. Everyone had an opinion, even people who didn't follow prize fighting.

"I think Willard," Lardner told Rice, "I think size. Willard is immense. I've bet $500 on him."

Rice replied: "I think you've made a mistake, Ring. An ox cannot defeat a tiger."

"No," injected, Rice's boss, W.O. McGeehan, editor of the *New York Tribune*, "but an elephant sure as hell can."

Prize fighting requires tremendous bravery. There is no doubt. It's part of what distinguishes it from other sports. All fight fans have seen fighters thrust themselves right up to the gates of hell, throwing punches all the way. So did Rice. He loved sport, but he wanted to keep it in its proper perspective.

"I saw skinny, four-eyed bank clerks killed when they charged German machine-gun nests," Rice said. "That was courage."

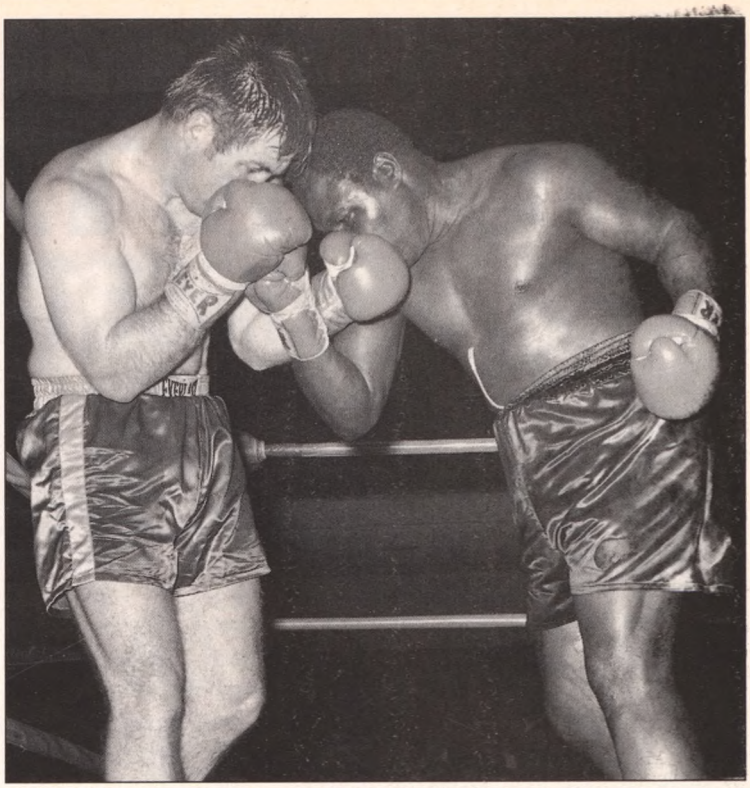
As I write this, Jones has kept everyone in the dark for weeks as he says he's contemplating whether he will or will not fight Ruiz. He has signed papers that may or may not be contracts, made commitments that may or may not be enforceable.

Perhaps Jones should consider the possibility that he takes himself too seriously. By the time you read this, we should all know what he finally decided. But guess what? He will make many millions if he fights heavyweight Ruiz. And if he faces Antonio Tarver? He will still earn millions.

It's true that there's more than just money at stake. And there is also danger. But for battlefield grunts, there's *no* money in the equation. There's no walking away. And the dangers can be paralyzing, unseen, hideous, unknowable. Stuff of darkness. Sometimes prize fighters go through awful ordeals. But it would be rare indeed for their experiences to chase them in the form of nightmares the rest of their lives. It's common among those who came through the fires of warfare.

Fighters join a tough, tough fraternity. But they can quit anytime they like. Yes, they might even be crippled, as Gerald McClellan was, or killed, as Jimmy Garcia was. But they won't make a mistake that will cost them their buddies' lives. They don't have to live with the worry of it, or sometimes, the memory of it.

What's more, even if Jones' analogy were apt, which it is not, then what about the 99.99 percent of fighters who don't make anywhere close to the millions Jones does? Guys in four-rounders usually earn about $500 before they pay off a manager, trainer, and cutman.



"Scrap Iron" wades into Quarry

They often enter the ring with no knowledge of their opponent. They don't have enough information to weigh the pros and cons of different opponents. That's a luxury.

But make no mistake. The $500 fighters face the same risks as the $10-million fighters. It might have helped Jones make his decision by studying the outcome of Dempsey vs. Willard. At the end of three rounds both fighters were soaked in Willard's blood. He had a broken jaw, a crushed cheekbone, two broken ribs, and he'd lost several teeth. His corner threw a bloody towel of surrender into the ring. Willard's eyes were so swollen that a spectator had to lead him back to his dressing room.

But he lived to tell about it.

"SCRAP IRON" HONORED: One of the nice things about the West Coast-based World Boxing Hall of Fame is its mission to remember fighters who distinguished themselves but were never champions. This year, at its 23rd annual banquet, the group bestowed a Special Recognition Award on heavyweight George "Scrap Iron" Johnson, who went 20-25-5 (10) from 1958 to 1975.

His opponents included Joe Frazier, George Foreman, Jerry Quarry, Ron Lyle, and Joe Bugner. Banquet-goers saw a tape of Scrap Iron backing up the deadly Sonny Liston. Sure, Liston eventually stopped him in seven. But Liston knew he'd faced a fighter, not a cupcake.

OTHER WBHOF AWARDS: Fighter of the Year: Vernon Forrest. Trainer of the Year: Ronnie Shields. Boxer inductees were Miguel Canto, George Foreman, Mike McCallum, and Lupe Pintor. Expanded category honorees were Bill Caplan, Larry Merchant, and Freddie Roach. A posthumous award went to Cuban refugee and former welterweight champion Luis Rodriguez. ■

BEING THERE

MOUNTAINEER RACE TRACK AND RESORT

Text by Jim Trunzo
Photos by Chuck Saus

After literally driving through the middle of the Weirton Steel factories, travelers find themselves on roads that meander through small towns, run parallel to scenic rivers, and empty into a bucolic rural setting. Then, 15 miles from downtown Weirton, almost mirage-like, the Mountaineer Race Track and Resort complex appears.

The Mountaineer, home of The Harv, a 5,100-seat arena, has become the destination of choice for many Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Ohio boxing fans. The Mountaineer first hosted fights in the grandstand area of the horse racing track. When Pittsburgh favorite Paul Spadafora fought Pito Cardona for the IBF lightweight title, the Mountaineer erected a massive tent to serve as cover for the televised event.

Shortly thereafter, Mountaineer Pres- dent and CEO Ted Arneault decided that permanent venue was needed to house bo boxing and concerts. Arneault, a long-tim fight fan, gave his blessing to the buildi of The Harv Arena, and has been rewarde for his efforts in the form of several maj fights.

The Harv has been the site of Dav Tua vs. Fres Oquendo and Robert Allen v Tito Mendoza, and was scheduled to ho the Spadafora vs. Dennis Holbaek Pede son fight as we went to press.

"We have a commitment to boxing stated Arneault, "that extends beyond ju big names and televised bouts. We unde stand that much of our success has bee due to our recognition of the regional fig fan. And while we certainly want to targ marquee bouts, we have no intention o forgetting lesser-known local fighters."

Arneault's comments were echoed b Tamara Petit, public relations coordinato

Tua clocks Oquendo in one of the major bouts held at the Mountaineer

IF YOU GO

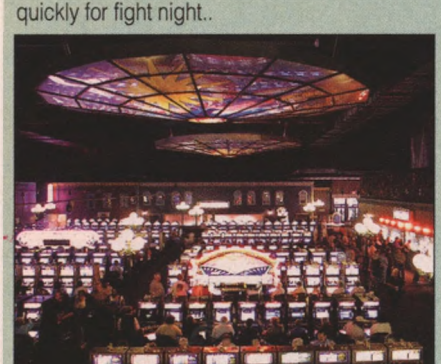
Location: Route 2, Chester, WV 26034; phone: 1-800-804-0468.

Directions: From Pittsburgh, take Route 22 west to Weirton, West Virginia. Get off at Exit 2 and follow Route 2 north to the Mountaineer. From Cleveland, take the Ohio Turnpike to Exit 15. Follow I-80 east to the Canfield/Route 11 South Exit. Take Route 11 to downtown East Liverpool (Ohio) Exit and follow Mountaineer signs. From Baltimore and Washington, D.C., take I-70 West to the Pennsylvania Turnpike at Breezewood. Follow turnpike west to the Pittsburgh Interchange (Exit 6) and head west toward Pittsburgh. Follow I-376 west out of Pittsburgh, then take Route 22 west to Weirton.

Tickets: Depending on the fight card, tickets range from $25 to $250. Tickets at all price ranges are usually available for walk-up sales the night of the fight. Doors open at 7 p.m.

Who to look out for: The Mountaineer caters to regional fighters from the northeastern part of the country. Vernon Forrest, William Joppy, and Spadafora have watched bouts there. Former junior lightweight titleholder Genaro Hernandez is frequently on hand, as part of CompuBox's punch-counting team, as are ESPN broadcasters Teddy Atlas and Bob Papa.

Advice to greenhorns: In addition to staging boxing events, the Mountaineer features horse racing and slot machines. Restaurants range from quick-fix sandwiches to coat-and-tie fine cuisine. If you plan on attending a fight of any significance and want to spend the night, you should get reservations early because the 360 available rooms get booked quickly for fight night..



There are plenty of slots for those inclined to gamble

The new 5,100-seat Harv Arena is perfect for boxing

The 360-room hotel fills up quickly on fight night

The Mountaineer also features horse racing

for the Mountaineer. "The Harv, while capable of holding all types of events, was built with boxing in mind. Our success as a fight venue can be seen in the increasing number of bouts being televised from our locale."

Two boxing powerbrokers, promoter Mike Acri and all-around boxing magnate Lou DiBella, applaud the Mountaineer's ongoing efforts to keep boxing active in the area.

"The Mountaineer and places like it are great for boxing," said Acri. "They provide a first-class outlet for up-and-coming fighters and give local boxing fans a chance to see big-name fighters and title bouts."

A full range of dining experiences are available at the Mountaineer

DiBella added some financial insight into the equation by driving home the point that the Mountaineer "gives the middle-tier fighters and the lighter-weight titleholders an affordable, attractive stage on which to perform."

Both Acri and DiBella praised the Mountaineer management for working with promoters to assure good fights. "They go out of their way down here, big fights or small fights, to make everything run smoothly," said Acri.

Arneault, along with promoters like Cedric Kushner and Acri, plans on making sure that the West Virginia hills are alive with the sound of punches. Boxing in all its forms will continue to be a staple at the Mountaineer Race Track and Resort. ■

CAMERA CLICKS

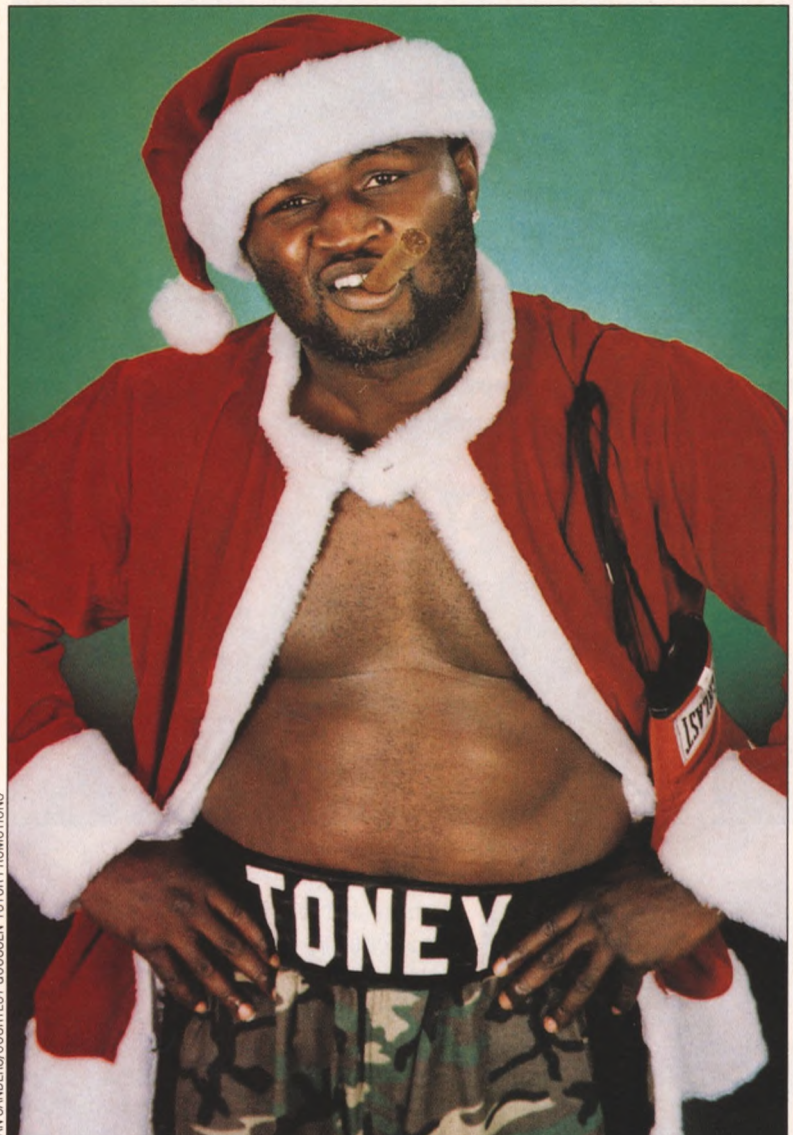


PHOTO BY JAN SANDERS/COURTESY GOOSSEN-TUTOR PROMOTIONS

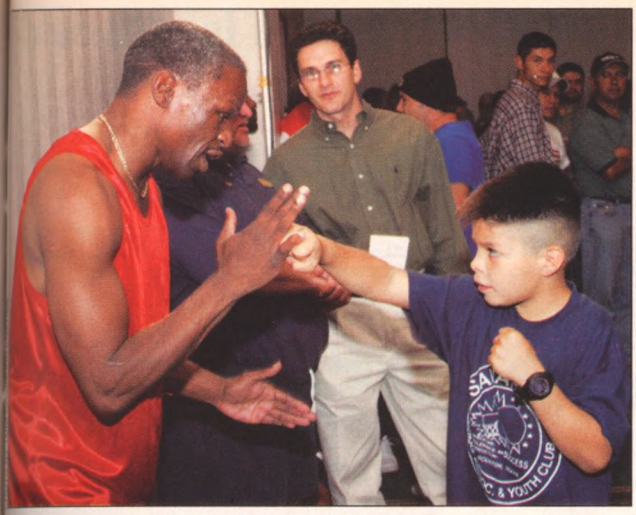
If this is the Santa Claus you envision stopping by your house, you'd better leave out an extra large plate of cookies to go with that milk. James "Lights Out" Toney got into the Christmas spirit at a recent photo shoot, and you can bet he'll be getting into the training spirit soon too if he wants to make 190 pounds for his upcoming showdown with IBF titleholder Vassiliy Jirov (and if he wants to avoid getting stuck in any chimneys).

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Donny Lalonde didn't fare so well when he took on one of th great welterweight/middleweight champions of the '80s, so i looks like he's ready to try his luck against one of the grea welterweight/middleweight champions of the '60s instead Even at age 64, Hall of Famer Emile Griffith might be a litt too tough for the comebacking Canadian.

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

Tokunbo Olajide really blew it when he took on Epifan Mendoza, a last-minute sub he knew nothing about, and in th picture, he's showing another way to really blow it. For tho who doubt that Olajide is a serious egomaniac, here's photo graphic evidence that he likes to toot his own horn.



Just how cocky has Floyd Mayweather Sr. become? He's now training Angel Bojado, the kid brother of Francisco "Panchito" Bojado, claiming he can coach Angel to a world title before his 10th birthday. "Just feeling him punch my hands, I can tell he hits hard enough already to knock out Fernando Vargas," Mayweather claimed.

You would think Sammy Hagar would have gotten his fill of craziness on his tour with fellow former Van Halen frontman David Lee Roth, but apparently he didn't. Hagar was a guest in the corner of Johnny Tapia, one of the few men loonier than Roth, for Tapia's November fight with Marco Antonio Barrera.

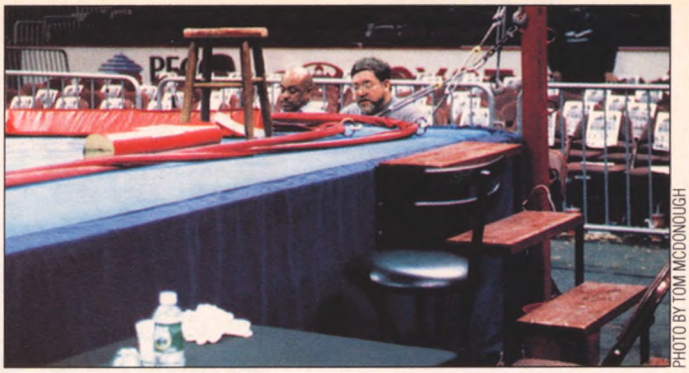


PHOTO BY TOM MCDONOUGH

Some boxing junkies simply don't know when to go home. Kevin Tatum of The Philadelphia Inquirer and Bernard Fernandez of the Philadelphia Daily News were two of the last men sitting at an October fight card at the First Union Spectrum, as they rushed to finish their stories before deadline. So we know what they were doing still there, but didn't photographer Tom McDonough have anything better to do than wait around for this shot?

PHOTO BY LARA STUART-REBNEY

Maybe it's the language barrier, but the word "retirement" seems to mean two very different things to these guys. Sugar Ray Leonard and Felix Trinidad met up in "Tito's" native Puerto Rico recently when Leonard promoted a fight card there. Rumor has it Leonard tried to get Trinidad to come out of retirement and fight on his show, but then Sugar Ray realized he didn't have any cruiserweights he could match Trinidad against.

NOSTALGIA CORNER

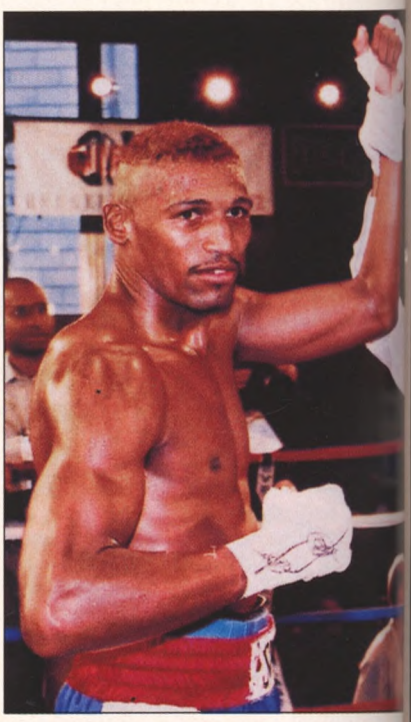
Three of these four men are in the International Boxing Hall of Fame, and the fourth seems determined to at least make it to the International Hugging Hall of Fame. That's former heavyweight contender "Two-Ton" Tony Galento putting the squeeze on the great Joe Louis, as fellow legends Mickey Walker and Barney Ross look on.

NEW FACES

EPIFANIO MENDOZA

Junior Middleweight

By Joe Santoliquito



PRO RECORD

1999		
Nov. 28	Waldo Torres, Valledupar, Colombia	KO 3
2000		
Feb. 15	Reynolda Duran, Barranquilla, Colombia	KO 2
May 5	Oscar Villarreal, Barranquilla	KO 2
June 30	Tomas Diaz, Barranquilla	KO 2
July 29	Manuel Valdez, Barranquilla	KO 3
Dec. 22	Carlos Gonzalez, Barranquilla	KO 2
2001		
Feb. 12	Victor Ochoa, Valledupar	KO 2
March 2	Jesus Arias, Valledupar	KO 1
June 29	Ruben Estrada, Barranquilla	KO 3
July 31	Rafael Castillo, Santa Marta, Colombia	KO 3
Nov. 17	Alberto Mantilla, Valledupar	KO 2
2002		
March 16	Vidal Diaz, Valledupar	KO 3
May 19	Jose Chiquillo, Maria La Baja, Colombia	KO 3
June 22	Tomas Diaz, Barranquilla	KO 3
July 12	Jose Chiquillo, Cartagena, Colombia	KO 2
Oct. 13	Tokunbo Olajide, New York City	KO 1

FIGHTS	WON	LOST	DRAW	KOs
16	16	0	0	16

There were no bedroom doors in the modest home into which seven people were crammed. The corrugated aluminum roof provided some shelter from the harsh Colombian sun, and the concrete floor kept the family's feet warm in the evening. What Epifanio Mendoza remembers the most, however, was the hollow feeling he endured as he waited each night.

If Dad found work that day in the fields, toiling for 12 hours at 50 cents an hour and arriving home dusty and haggard, that meant the family ate that night. If not, Epifanio and his four siblings would go to bed hungry. There were spans of time when Mendoza's father would go days without work, coming home with nothing. When things got really desperate, Mendoza and his family would climb papaya trees and pick dinner, cooking the fruit on the family's outdoor wooden stove.

Maybe this explains Mendoza's inner drive to succeed—and why he clings to each success like a starving man grasps food. Maybe it explains why each time Mendoza steps into the ring, he approaches a fight like it's life or death. And finally, maybe it's why the unknown Mendoza shocked the boxing world with his first-round kayo of Tokunbo Olajide at New York's Regent Wall Street Hotel on October 13, handing the red-hot prospect his first professional defeat with a left hook followed by a crushing right cross.

There was nothing that was going to deny the sinewy 6'2" Colombian junior middleweight against Olajide. But there were certainly a wealth of questions surrounding the mysterious Mendoza, 16-0 (16), before he made the most of his United States TV debut on ESPN. For one, Mendoza had a glossy record, with every fight won by knockout, yet "Diamante" (Spanish for diamond) had never fought outside of his na Colombia. When ESPN was frantically look for a competitive late replacement to f Olajide, they turned to Mendoza on Tues October 8, five days before the scheduled figh

Mendoza, 27, didn't care. All he saw was opportunity, something neither he nor his fam was ever afforded in the drug-ravaged, pover stricken South American country of Colombi

"That's why beating Olajide was a g opportunity for me," said the Spanish-speak Mendoza through his manager, Rafael Revi "I was hungry for it. I had good training an good punch. I knew I would knock out Ola inside three rounds. I saw the videos of him an knew he lowered his right too much in eve fight. You'd have to kill me to beat me. I wa my whole life for this opportunity. That's wh

(Continued on page

International Boxing Hall of Fame - Canastota, New York I ♥ NY

ANNUAL INDUCTION WEEKEND JUNE 5-8, 2003

★ A Championship Weekend in Boxing's Hometown ★

BANQUET OF CHAMPIONS

Reunion . . . Emile Griffith and Nino Benvenuti recall three memorable championship fights.

FIST CASTING

Everlasting . . . Fist cast by Jeff Fenech.

PARADE OF CHAMPIONS

Marvelous . . . Marvin Hagler waves to fans.

Hooray . . . Earnie Shavers shows off the stars and stripes.

CELEBRITY BOXING NIGHT

HECTOR CAMACHO

Fight Night . . . Popular boxers featured in action-packed bouts at Turning Stone Casino Resort.

MUSEUM GROUNDS

Star-Studded . . . Ruben Olivares signs a poster while Bert Sugar and Christy Martin square off for the fans.

5K RACE, FUN RUN

Finish Line . . . "Irish" Micky Ward in stride.

Go . . . Ken Norton officially starts race of celebrity boxers and runners.

INDUCTION CEREMONY

PHOTO BY MIKE GREENHILL

A Moment in Time . . . Pipino Cuevas, Jeff Fenech and Reg Gutteridge proudly display their Hall of Fame rings.

BOXING CARD SHOW

A Collector's Dream . . . Boxing memorabilia for fans. The world's only all-boxing show draws collectors from throughout the world.

GOLF TOURNAMENT

Chip . . . Gerry Cooney (l) chips onto 18th green while Sir Henry Cooper (r) is enroute to next tee.

VIP COCKTAIL RECEPTION

Stars . . . Boxers and fans enjoy VIP reception while Angelo Dundee receives red carpet welcome.

WORKOUT SESSIONS

Christy Martin laces up her gloves and Bernard Hopkins hits the speed bag.

RINGSIDE TALKS

Reminiscing. . . Alexis Arguello (L) reunites with Ruben Olivares (R).

Yes! Please send me a brochure of the Schedule of Events and ticket information

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Phone _____

Int'l Boxing Hall of Fame
PO Box 425 • Canastota, NY 13032

Call: 315-697-7095
or Fax: 315-697-5356

Madison County Tourism 1-800-684-7320

Back Issues of The RING

Add to your RING collection by ordering from our limited supply of back issues. Single issues are $5 each. Order by the year and save up to 30%. Listed prices include postage and handling. Supplies are limited. To assure fulfillment order today.

March 1982 (100-Page Special): Sanchez & Leonard: Fighters Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awrds, Chandler gatefold, 1981 in review, boxing calendar, powers-that-be.

Aug. 1982: Cooney—Is He The Real McCoy? Plus: Holmes-Cooney, Howard Davis Jr., Limon-Navarette, Rocky Marciano, British heavyweights.

Feb. 1983: Michael Dokes: Tainted Champion? Plus: Howard Cosell, Ray Mancini, Bum of the Month Club, Chacon-Limon.

March 1983 (108-Page Special): Larry Holmes—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Donald Curry, Milton McCrory, Fight, Upset, Comeback, and Prospect of the Year.

April 1983: Randall "Tex" Cobb: Not Just Another Pretty Face. Plus: Hector Camacho, Boxing Writer's Hall of Fame (Monzon, Foster, Burley), second generation fighters, Stanley Ketchel.

May 1983: Michael Spinks Wins It All. Plus: Spinks-Braxton color, Bob Arum, Marvin Hagler, Collins-LaPaglia.

June 1983: What Now For Ray Mancini? Plus: Lupe Pintor, Paddy Flood, Bonecrusher Smith, Charlie Brown, Frazier-Broad, Chang-Zapata, Holmes-Teofilo Stevenson, Tony Ayala, Jersey Joe Walcott.

Aug. 1983: Roberto Duran: One "Mas" Time. Plus: Larry Holmes, Colin Jones, Jimmy Montoya, Alexis Arguello, Billy Petrolle, Duran-Moore, Frazier-Bugner, Resto-Collins, Escalera-Hatcher.

Sept. 1983: Sugar Ray Leonard Talks About His Past, Present, And Future. Plus: Panama Lewis, Spinks-Mustafa Muhammad, Hagler-Duran preview, Johnson-Gotch.

Nov. 1983: Gerrie Coetzee: The New Heavyweight Champ Sets His Sights On Holmes. Plus: Alexis Arguello, Murray Sutherland, James J. Braddock, Muhammad Ali.

Feb. 1984: Don King Talks And Talks And Talks. Plus: Leonard's return, Eddie Mustafa Muhammad, 1983 quotes, Marvin Hagler, Johnny Bratton, Gerald Hayes, Hagler-Duran color.

June 1984: Bumphus, Lockridge, Duva: "That Championship Year." Plus: Ferdie Pacheco, Harry Arroyo, Holmes-Coetzee preview, Pipino Cuevas, Aaron Pryor, Battling Nelson-Joe Gans, Witherspoon-Page.

July 1984: Bazooka's Aim Is True: Gomez Shoots Down LaPorte In The Battle For San Juan. Plus: Michael Spinks, Vinny Pazienza, Tyrone Crawley, Leonard's comeback, Chandler-Sandoval, Hagler-Roldan.

Aug. 1984: RING Olympic Special. Plus: Bramble-Mancini, Hatcher-Bumphus, Mark Breland, Sugar Ray Leonard, Albert Davila, Bonecrusher-Bruno.

Sept. 1984: The Scramble For Bramble: Livingstone's Wrapped Up In Being A Champion. Plus: Eusebio Pedroza, Marvin Hagler, Roberto Duran, Rosario-Davis, Pryor-Furlano.

Oct. 1984: The Beast From The East: John Mugabi Strikes Terror Into The Hearts Of Men. Plus: Olympics, Bill Costello, Davey Moore, Wilfred Benitez, King's heavyweights.

Dec. 1984: Hagler Hammers Hamsho. Plus: Barry McGuigan, James Broad, Pinklon Thomas, Julian Jackson.

Jan. 1985: Holmes-Bonecrusher Color Action. Plus: Gerry Cooney, pro debuts (Breland, Hill, Taylor, Biggs, Whitaker, Holyfield), Santos-Medal, Meza-Garza.

Feb. 1985: Showdown: Page Clobbers Coetzee For WBA Title. Plus: Larry Holmes, lightweights, Cooney-Chaplin, McCallum-Minchillo.

March 1985: Thomas Hearns—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Annual ratings, Fight, Upset, Round, Comeback, and Prospect of the Year.

May 1985: The Rematch In Reno: Bramble-Mancini Color Action. Plus: Donald Curry, Aaron Pryor, McGuigan-LaPorte.

June 1985: Holmes' Last Hurrah? Holmes-Bey Color Action. Plus: Holmes vs. all-time greats, Paul-Arroyo, 1901.

Aug. 1985: Seven Elected To THE RING Hall Of Fame (Jose Napoles, Jake LaMotta, Panama Al Brown, Manuel Ortiz, Young Stribling, Thomas Jackling, Lord Lonsdale). Plus: Spinks-Holmes preview, Barry McGuigan.

Oct. 1985: The "Macho Man" Rides Again. Plus: Jeff Fenech, Berbick-Green, John E. Garcia, Dwight Muhammad Qawi, McCallum-Braxton.

Nov. 1985: Will Hagler Feast On The Beast? Plus: Hagler-Mugabi & Hearns-Shuler previews, Lonnie Smith, Pintor-Meza, Chuck Hull, Benitez-Moley.

Dec. 1985: Michael Spinks: Against All Odds. Plus: Curry-McCrory preview, McGuigan-Taylor, Alexis Arguello, Michael Olajide, Chavez-Pratchett.

Jan. 1986: In Search Of A Heavyweight Champion. Plus: Azumah Nelson, Arguello-Jefferson, Olympic update, Chicago boxing.

March 1986 (Awards Issue): Co-Fighters Of The Year: Marvelous Marvin Hagler & Donald Curry. Plus: THE RING's Annual Awards, Evander Holyfield, Williamson-Muhammad, Camacho-Roach, 1985 boxing diary.

April 1986: Witherspoon Tames Tubbs For WBA Title. Plus: Dream fights, Greg Haugen, Tyrell Biggs, Mark Breland, Paul Gonzales, HBO tourney, Witherspoon-Tubbs, Frank Warren, Gene Tunney.

May 1986: Marvelous Marvin Tames The Beast. Plus: Hearns-Shuler, Mike Tyson, Bramble-Crawley, Sandoval-Canizales, Marvin Johnson, McGuigan-Cabrera, Arguello-Costello, Weaver-Williams.

June 1986: Barry's Back In The USA: McGuigan Breathes A Breath Of Fresh Air Into American Fight Scene. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Robbie Sims, Qawi-Holyfield preview, Berbick-Thomas, Bruno-Coetzee.

July 1986: Spinks-Holmes II: Who Really Won? Plus: Frank Bruno, Richie Sandoval, Kevin Watts, Tyson-Tillis, Boza-Edwards-Alli, Johnson-Burns.

Aug. 1986: Is Sugar Ray Still Sweet? Plus: Lloyd Honeyghan, Tyson-Green, Cooney-Gregg, Hall of Fame (Eder Jofre, Benny Lynch, Bud Taylor, Sam McVey, Nat Langham, John Chambers), Bernardo Pinango.

Sept. 1986: Gerry Cooney vs. Mike Tyson: Who Would Win? Plus: Cruz-McGuigan, Hearns-Medal, Tyson-Gross, Sims-Duran.

Dec. 1986: The Weekend That Shook The Boxing World. Rosario-Bramble & Honeyghan-Curry. Plus: Butch Lewis interview, Buster Drayton, Hector Camacho, Jake LaMotta.

April 1987: Hagler-Leonard Souvenir Issue. Plus: Czyz, Orlando Canizales, Mugabi-Thomas, Biggs-Snipes, Chavez-LaPorte, Bonecrusher-Witherspoon II, Haugen-Paul.

May 1987: Mike Tyson: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awards, THE RING annual ratings, Louie Espinoza, Herol Graham.

June 1987: Vinny Paz: Phenom Or Phony? Plus: Tyson-Bonecrusher, Mark Breland, Brian Mitchell, Evander Holyfield, Czyz-Edwards, Olajide-Lee, Curry-Montgomery.

July 1987: Spinks-Cooney: The Fight That Refused To Die. Plus: The new RING ratings, Terry Marsh, George Foreman's return, Khaosai Galaxy, Hearns-Andries, Whitaker-Mayweather.

Aug. 1987: Sugar Ray: Still In Style. Plus: Leonard-Hagler, all-time heavyweight ratings, Czyz-MacDonald, Camacho-Davis.

Sept. 1987: Michael Olajide: The Look Of The Future? Plus: Tyson-Thomas, Jeff Fenech, middleweight muddle, Tsuyoshi Hamada, Juan Roldan, Harold Knight.

Nov. 1987: Tyson Wins Heavyweight Triple Crown. Plus: McCallum-Curry, Carlos Monzon interview, triple champions, Orlin & Terry Norris, Ramirez-Alli, Fenech-Richardson, Matthew Hilton.

Dec. 1987: Spinks & Lewis: Boxing's Beastie Boys. Plus: Starling-Breland, Ramzi Hassan, Honeyghan-Hatcher, Holyfield-Ocasio.

Jan. 1988: Darrin Van Horn—Million Dollar Baby? Plus: Evander Holyfield, Hill-Stewart, Juan Coggi, great hookers, AIDS.

Feb. 1988: Gold Outshines Glitter: Tate Tops Olajide. Plus: Tyson-Biggs, Kalambay-Barkley, Hearns-Roldan, fights we'd like to see.

March 1988: Thomas "Hit Man" Hearns: "Now I Own History." Plus: Lockridge & Mayweather, Tony Burton, Julio Cesar Chavez, blood.

April 1988: Evander Holyfield: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Special year-end awards, Holyfield-Qawi II, Foreman-Sekorski, Hill-Angulo.

May 1988: George Foreman: "I Can Beat Tyson." Plus: Tyson-Holmes, Jesse Benavides, Showtime, no-knockout artists.

Sept. 1988: Sugar Ray: Here He Comes Again! Plus: Andries-Czyz, Kid Chocolate, Don Dunphy, Don Lalonde.

Oct. 1988: Mike Tyson: What Price Glory? Plus: Tyson-Spinks, Hearns-Barkley, Davey Moore.

Nov. 1988: Donny Lalonde: "Sugar Ray is Out Of His Mind!" Plus: Hall of Fame selections (Carlos Ortiz, Joe Brown, Billy Graham, Cus D'Amato, Jimmy Jacobs), Nunn-Tate, Molinares-Starling, Honeyghan-Chung, '88 Olympians.

Jan. 1989: Meldrick Taylor: Philly Phenom. Plus: Marvin Hagler, Alex Wallau, Taylor-McGirt, Olympic results.

Feb. 1989: Julio Cesar Chavez. Plus: Chavez-Ramirez, all-time lightweight ratings, Louie Espinoza, Simon Brown, Roger Mayweather.

March 1989: Hearns Next For Sugar Ray? Plus: Leonard-Lalonde, Prince Charles Williams, Hearns-Kinchen, Nunn-Roldan, Hines-Hilton.

May 1989: The Best Of '88. Plus: Year-end awards, Evander Holyfield, Pryor-Morales, Fenech-Navarro.

Jan. 1990: Boxing's Bible Reborn At Age 68. Plus: Carlos Monzon, Mike Tyson, Leonard-Duran, Daniel Zaragoza, Nunn-Barkley, Whitaker-Ramirez, George Foreman (color).

Feb. 1990: Mike Tyson: Riddick Bowe & Ray Mercer Take Aim. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Gerry Cooney, Chuck Wepner, Antonio Esparragoza, Roman-Laciar.

March 1990: The '80s—Great Fights, Great Fighters (color). Plus: Jeff Harding, Evander Holyfield, Pete Rademacher, Sharkey-McCoy.

April 1990: Pernell Whitaker: Fighter Of The Year (color). Plus: Tiger Flowers, Duran-Leonard, Chavez-Taylor preview, Jorge Paez, Ali-Cooper.

May 1990: Big George Talks Tough: "Tyson Won't Be That Difficult!" Plus: Ed Hopson, Russian fighters, grudge wars, Archie Moore, Kid Berg, Marcel Cerdan, Chavez-Cortes.

June 1990: Buster! How James Douglas Shocked The World. Plus: Michael Moorer, Camacho-Paez, Tommy Farr, excuses, Dick Tiger, Ruben Olivares-Jeff Chandler.

July 1990: "I'm Hungrier Than Ever Before," By Evander Holyfield. Plus: James Toney, Buddy McGirt, Glenwood Brown, Aaron Davis, Michael Carbajal, Jorge Paez, Kid Gavilan, Mark Breland, Ali-Liston II (color).

Aug. 1990: Chavez: His Greatness Confirmed ... Is He The Best Mexican Fighter Ever? Plus: Matthew Saad Muhammad, John L. Sullivan & Mike Tyson, Michael Nunn, Mark Breland, Harold Johnson, Cus D'Amato, Louis-Godoy (color).

Sept. 1990: Marvin Hagler—Can He Resist The Irresistible Temptation? Plus: Thomas Hearns, Sanchez-Saddler, Paul Banke, puncher vs. chin, Beau Jack, Robinson-LaMotta (color).

Nov. 1990: Tyson vs. Foreman. Can Iron Mike Stop The Blast From The Past? Plus: Bruce Seldon, best chins, Sullivan-Kilrain (color), Azumah Nelson, LaStarza.

Dec. 1990: Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Douglas-Holyfield preview, Julio Cesar Chavez, Joe Grim, Whitaker-Nazario, Rosi-Van Horn, Benny Leonard, Douglas-Tyson (color).

Jan. 1991: Boxing's Baddest Bad Boy: Nigel Benn Plays By His Own Rules. Plus: Roberto Duran, Kid Akeem, Jose Napoles, Jimmy Carruthers, LaMotta-Zale, Dempsey-Willard (color).

Feb. 1991: Boxing On TV—Now You'll Pay! Plus: Ismael Laguna, Tommy Morrison in *Rocky V*, Reggie Tuur, Chiquita Gonzalez, Harold Green, Joe Louis.

March 1991: Hunger! It Made Evander A Champ, But ... Plus: Dempsey-Firpo, Charles Murray, Khaosai Galaxy, Nunn-Curry, Henry Armstrong, Sonny Liston (color).

April 1991: Julio Cesar Chavez—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Tyson-Stewart, James Leija, Wilfred Benitez, Pedro Decima, Moore-Bassey.

June 1991: Pain, Frustration, Confidence, And Hope: Meldrick Taylor's Life After Chavez. Plus: Foreman-Holyfield preview, Norris-Leonard, David [illegible] Freddie Steele, Bennie Briscoe, Leonard's [illegible] (color).

July 1991: Tyson's Title Hopes: He Ain't Wh[illegible] Used To Be ... But It's Not Gonna Matter. Eusebio Pedroza, Myung Woo Yuh, Willie [illegible] Hearns-Hill preview, computer junior welter[illegible] tournament, Gomez-Fenech, controversial heav[illegible] finishes (color).

Aug. 1991: Foreman Gives Holyfield A Fight ... The World A Thrill (color). Plus: Making weight[illegible] Greb, Kevin Kelley, Louis-Conn I, Simon [illegible] Blocker, Chavez-Duplessis, Sugar Ray Robinson.

Oct. 1991: A Hit Again—How Far Can The[illegible] Hearns Go? Plus: Battling Levinsky, Oba Car[illegible] McAuley, Muhammad Ali, Lou Ambers, [illegible] McCarty, ethnic matchups, computer light-[illegible] tournament, Cerdan-Hagler, Rocky Marciano [illegible]

Dec. 1991: Evander Holyfield vs. Mike Tyson: Will Win And Why. Plus: Eddie Aliano, Jack [illegible] Muhammad Ali, Pernell Whitaker, rating the All-[illegible] champions, Marcel Cerdan, Henry Cooper, [illegible] Charles-Jersey Joe Walcott (color).

Jan. 1992: The State Of The Game. Plus: [illegible] Quarry, Julio Cesar Chavez, Mysterious Billy [illegible] Joey Gamache.

May 1992: James Toney—Fighter Of The Year. [illegible] Myung Woo Yuh, Khaosai Galaxy, Rocky Gra[illegible] Billy Soose, Roy Jones, James Warring, Jul[illegible] Chavez, Marvin Hagler (color).

July 1992: Does Larry Holmes Deserve A Title [illegible] Plus: Nelson-Fenech II, Tracy Patterson, Ke[illegible] Dorsey, fat fighters, Buchanan-Camacho, Home[illegible] (color).

Aug. 1992: Holyfield-Holmes Prefight. Holmes: 'See Me Takin' Holyfield Outta There." Plus: [illegible] Barkley, Herbie Hide, George Foreman, Ten [illegible] Carnival of Champions, Harry Greb, Haugen-Ka[illegible] Oscar De La Hoya, Gene Tunney (color).

Sept. 1992: Chavez: Unbeaten At 80-0, But Will He Had To Face These Guys? Plus: Bobby [illegible] Genaro Hernandez, Norris-Taylor, Tommy Gib[illegible] Sugar Ray Leonard's career, Sugar Ray Robi[illegible] (color).

Nov. 1992: Is Riddick Bowe The Next Heavyw[illegible] Champion? Plus: Morrison-Hipp, Canizales-Chav[illegible] Chavez-Camacho preview, Australia Best of All [illegible] Tyson speaks from prison, Corbett-Sullivan [illegible] Tracy Patterson, Pat Barrett, Knockout Brown.

Feb. 1993: America's Tribute To The Brown Bom[illegible] Joe Louis. Plus: Virgil Hill, Junior Jones, Ke[illegible] Mayweather, Chicago boxing, Orlando Zulueta, [illegible] Napoles (color).

April 1993: Riddick Bowe—Fighter Of The Y[illegible] Plus: "Grand Slam" fight card, Toney-Barkley pre[illegible] Morris East, Joe Louis-John Henry Lewis, Ali-[illegible] Top 10: Argentina, Fighters of the Year (color).

May 1993: Oscar De La Hoya's Sprint To The Th[illegible] He Good Enough *Now?* Plus: Carbajal-Gom[illegible] preview, Lennox Lewis, THE RING Poll, Fo[illegible] Pendleton.

April 1994: Michael Carbajal—Fighter Of The Y[illegible] Plus: Brown-Norris, Kevin Kelley, Ceferino Ga[illegible] Oscar De La Hoya, Tunney Hunsaker, Spinks-Ruiz.

May 1994: Division-By-Division: The Great[illegible] Fighters Of All-Time. Plus: Hill & Canizales, Ka[illegible] Tsyzu, James Toney, What If: Dempsey vs. Wills.

Aug. 1994: Bowe's Back! Determined To Do It [illegible] Plus: Eric Griffin, Pernell Whitaker, Ray Mercer, [illegible] Donoghue, State of the Game (midterm report), [illegible] Time Top 10: The Philippines.

Oct. 1994: Rating The Champs: Whitaker & [illegible] Lead The Field ... But Roy Jones Is Closing [illegible] Plus: Oscar De La Hoya, Meldrick Taylor, Ke[illegible] Ruelas, Curtis Cokes.

Dec. 1994: Fighting-Mad! James Toney Just Wan[illegible] To Beat People Up. Plus: Duran & Robinson [illegible] King, Mike McCallum, injuries (part II), [illegible] Molineaux.

Jan. 1995: A Puncher's Dream: Oliver McCall's [illegible] Boxing's Balance Of Power. Plus: Ruelas bom[illegible] Quincy Taylor, "Unfinished Business," Dave Mo[illegible] Time Top 10: Canada.

1995: The State Of The Game. Plus: Olzubek & ...chakov, Gonzalez-Kelley, Pazienza-Duran II, All-...e Top 10: France.
...1995: (92-Page Special): Foreman Frowns Upon ...Age Gap: "I Don't Think Tyson Should Fight ...ne But Me." Plus: Least deserving heavyweight ...lengers, Carlos Monzon, Kostya Tszyu.
...1995: Pernell Whitaker: THE RING Makes ...und-For-Pound" An Official Title. Plus: Riddick ...e, Ike Quartey, Benn-McClellan, TV prospects, ...tor Acero-Sanchez, Harry Matthews, What If ... ...nson-Burley.
...1995 (92-Page Special): Mismatch? Don't Tell ...er McNeeley! Plus: Fights we'd like to see, Jo-el ...t, Bronco McKart, when stop fights?
...1995: Mike Tyson (vs. Peter McNeeley): The ...t Is Yet To Come. Plus: Morrison-Lewis preview, ...eem Hamed, Chiquita Gonzalez, Gaspar Ortega, 10 ...t chins.
...iter 1995 (92-Page Special): Buster Mathis Jr.: ...ike Tyson, You Got A Fight Comin' On." Plus: ...yfield-Bowe III preview, Wayne McCullough, Jesse ...es Hughes, Norris-Vaden preview, THE RING ...ders' Poll, What If ... Moore-Ayala Jr.
...1996: King Bruno! A Hero Always ... A Winner ...Last. Plus: Julio Cesar Chavez, Oscar De La Hoya, ...ris Eubank, Eddie Perkins, who's hot/who's not.
...1996: Bowe's The Man (For Now), But Is He ...Enough For Tyson? Plus: Lennox Lewis, Hamed-...rera, Paul Banke, Vince Phillips, boxing on Madison ...e, What If ... Leonard-Pryor.
...1996: Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of ...e Game. Plus: Frankie Randall, Tim Witherspoon, ...Jones, Bernard Hopkins.
...1996: Lennox Lewis: Tough Enough For Tyson? ...c Lewis-Mercer, Olympic team, Pernell Whitaker, ...k Johnson, Rocky, Scrapiron Johnson, ...yweight hopefuls.
...1996: Pole-Axed! Low Blows, Sinking Bowe, ...ty Show. Plus: Bowe-Golota I, Blinky Palermo, ...ing fighters, Winky Wright, Joe Brown.
...1996: Our Spin On Roy Jones. Plus: ...yweight division, Olympic recap, Luis Rodriguez, ...rto Rican fighters, Danny Hodge, Saad ...ammad.
...1997: De La Hoya-Whitaker: Can "Sweet Pea" ...p Oscar's March To Greatness? Plus: ...mmons-Corbett, Junior Jones, Phillip Holiday, ...n King, Zaragoza-McCullough.
...e 1997 (Special Collector's Issue): Holyfield-...on II: What It Means For Now ... And Forever. ...s: Holyfield-Tyson fight poster, Naseem Hamed, ...puter unification, Sayers-Heenan, state of the ...ne.
...1997: Leonard: There Wasn't Even A Ray Of ...e. Plus: Felix Trinidad, David Reid, Willie deWit & ...n O'Sullivan, THE RING's 75th anniversary, Moore-...ale I.
...1997: Bang! Naseem Hamed Takes Aim At ...erica. Plus: Riddick Bowe, Phillips-Tszyu, Saman ...aturong, Bobby Dykes.
...1997: Is Mike Tyson Finished? Plus: Ike ...abuchi, De La Hoya-Camacho preview, Frankie ...ley, Hall of Fame, gloves,
...iday 1997: Roy Jones: When He's Motivated, ...e's Unstoppable—Got That, Evander? Plus: Julio ...ar Green, Sugar Shane Mosley, boxers' day jobs, ...on's mentor, Kid Lavigne.

Jan. 1998: Give This Man His Due! If You Can't Respect Oscar ... You Can't Respect Anyone! Plus: Sanchez-Mayweather, Morales-Zaragoza, Lucia Rijker, Marvin Johnson, characters.
Feb. 1998: Welter-Skelter! The Hottest Division In Boxing. Plus: Lewis-Golota, Olympic update, Art Shires, boxing I.Q.
March 1998 (92-Page Special): Into The Millennium With The Real Deal: THE RING's Timeline For Evander Holyfield. Plus: Hernandez-Hernandez, Briggs-Foreman, 10 champs recall "The Day I Won The Title," Johnny Thompson.
April 1998: Evander Holyfield: THE RING's Fighter Of The Year (Again!). Plus: Yory Boy Campas, Mullings-Norris, Pinkey Mitchell, Holyfield Q & A, Hamed-Kelley, Oscar De La Hoya.
June 1998 (92-Page Special): The State Of The Game. Plus: Tyson-King, David Reid, Bernard Hopkins, Ken Norton.
July 1998: Holyfield ... Tapia ... Hamed ... Jones ... Trinidad ... De La Hoya: Who Will Be The First To Fall? Plus: Magic Johnson, Chavez-Gonzalez & Lopez-Alvarez, underappreciated boxers.
Aug. 1998: Lennox Lewis: No Holyfield, No Glory. Plus: Felix Trinidad, Pat & Mike McMurtry, Chris Byrd, unbreakable records, contenders & pretenders.
Sept. 1998 (92-Page Special): This Man's Not Unbeatable! Five Top Trainers Reveal How To Solve The Hamed Puzzle. Plus: John Tate, Freddie Norwood, Andrew Golota, Roy Jones, 12 greatest finishes.
Oct. 1998: Really Hard Punch ... Really Soft Lips: Oscar Makes Legs Quiver In And Out Of The Ring. Plus: Hector Camacho Jr., Mayweather-Hernandez preview, *Tuesday Night Fights*.
Jan. 1999: Sugar Shane Mosley: The Sweet Tradition Continues. Plus: Evander Holyfield, Julio Cesar Chavez, Erik Morales, Ray "Windmill" White.
Feb. 1999: 1999! It's Gonna Be A Great Year For Boxing. Plus: Mike Tyson, Foreman-Holmes, David Reid, Eric Morel, Richie Mitchell, quitters.
March 1999: De La Hoya vs. Quartey: Does Bazooka Have The Weapons To Shoot Down Oscar? Plus: Sugar Shane Mosley, Lopez-Alvarez II, Roy Jones, Coley Wallace.
April 1999 (92-Page Special): Fighter Of The Year: Floyd Mayweather Jr.: "He's So Good, It's Scary!" Plus: Fernando Vargas, James Page, Luisito Espinosa, Robinson-Gatti II, Archie Moore, Carlos Oritz, 1998 diary.
May 1999: Is It All Over For Tyson? Plus: Terry Norris, Vinny Pazienza, Jesus Pimental, stoppages, mandatories.
June 1999: The Fans Have Spoken: Results Of THE RING Readers' Poll. Plus: Michael Grant, De La Hoya-Quartey, Antwun Echols, Ted Lowry.
July 1999 (92-Page Special): The State Of The Game. Plus: Holyfield-Lewis, Felix Trinidad, Stevie Johnston, Emile Griffith, Phil Zwick.
Aug. 1999: Candidates For Greatness: Can Anyone Fill The Heavyweight Void? Plus: Tim Austin, Naseem Hamed, Oscar De La Hoya, Max Schmeling, Holyfield-Lewis.
Sept. 1999: Taking Stock In The Fight Game: Who's Hot, Who's Not. Plus: Tony Ayala, Keith Holmes, Denny & Phil Moyer, scoring.
Oct. 1999 (92-Page Special): Felix & Oscar Go To War! Who's Going To Prevail In The Welter Shootout? Plus: Floyd Mayweather, Harry Simon, Omar Sheika, Al Andrews, 20 greatest fighters of 20th century.
Dec. 1999: Insiders' Analysis: Can Roy Jones Chop Down The Best Heavyweights? Plus: Ike Ibeabuchi, David Reid, David Tua, Carmen Basilio, Johnny Summerlin.
Holiday 1999 (92-Page Special): Heavyweight Showdowns! Holyfield vs. Lewis II, Grant vs. Golota. Plus: Francois Botha, Arturo Gatti, Michael Carbajal, Rocky Marciano, Lou Filippo.
Jan. 2000: What Does Trinidad's Victory Over Oscar Mean? Plus: Floyd Mayweather, Paul Spadafora, Ralph Dupas, boxing media.
March 2000: Lennox Lewis: The Champ For The Millennium ... Or Just For The Moment? Plus: Oleg Maskaev, Main Events, Derrick Jefferson, Jerry Buss, IBF scandal.
April 2000 (92-Page Special): Paulie Ayala—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Evander Holyfield, Grant-Golota, Stephan Johnson, Gaspar Ortega, Kitten Hayward, writers' favorite fights.
May 2000: Lennox Lewis Will Quit ... Or Get Knocked Out, By Michael Grant. Plus: Roy Jones, Quartey-Vargas preview, Garth Panter, best chins, boxing movies.
June 2000: The Honors Keep Coming! Lenox Lewis Receives The Undisputed RING Belt. Plus: Roy Jones, Vernon Forrest, Teddy Atlas, Mike Tyson, Don Fullmer.
July 2000 (92-Page Special): The State Of The Game. Plus: Felix Trinidad, Zab Judah, Oscar De La Hoya, Barrera-Morales, Ken Buchanan, Beau Jack, Eric Bottjer.
Aug. 2000: Hamed! And The Men Who Want To Kick His Naz! Plus: David Reid, James Prince, Anthony Fletcher, Micky Ward, final beatings, white hopes.
Sept. 2000: A New Look At Lennox Lewis: Is He An All-Time Great? Plus: Winky Wright, Michael Moorer, De La Hoya & Vargas, Eddie McGoorty.
Oct. 2000 (92-Page Special): Move Up Or Shut Up! We're Sick Of Roy Jones' Heavyweight Tease. Plus: Lennox Lewis, Tapia & Romero, Hasim Rahman, Dwight Qawi, Al Palzer, fight films, best refs.
(ALL-COLOR BEGINNING WITH THE DECEMBER 2000 ISSUE)
Dec. 2000: The Hell With Tyson—Tua Is The Man Who Could Beat Lewis. Plus: Mike Tyson, Felix Trinidad, Wladimir Klitschko, Trilla in Manila, U.S. vs. World, Toxey Hall.
Jan. 2001 (108-Page Extra): Trinidad's Destiny: Jones Is On His Mind ... But Vargas Is In His Face! Plus: Naseem Hamed, Tszyu-Judah, Evander Holyfield, Willie Bean, 20 greatest middleweights.
Feb. 2001: It's Not Over For Oscar: THE RING's Five-Step Recovery Plan. Plus: Bob Arum, Dingaan Thobela, Hernandez brothers, U.S. Olympic team, future pound-for-pounders.
March 2001 (108-Page Extra): Tyson! Forget About Retirement ... A Title Shot Awaits! Plus: Ayala-Tapia II, Audley Harrison, Chris Byrd, Kirk Johnson, Julio Cesar Chavez, Boone Kirkman, 12 most exciting rounds.
April 2001: A New Beginning ... A New Middle: Felix Trinidad Is Ready To Conquer Another Division! Plus: Shane Mosley, Lennox Lewis, Paul Andrews, boxing business.
May 2001 (108-Page Extra): Felix Trinidad—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awards, Barrera-Hamed preview, Bernard Hopkins, Joey Archer.
June 2001: Pretty Boy Floyd: Superstar Or Superbrat? Plus: Lewis vs. greats, 2000 Olympians, Henry Hall, rematches we'd like to see.
July 2001 (108-Page Extra): The State Of The Game. Plus: Zab Judah, John Ruiz, Andrew Lewis, Mark Johnson, British boxing.
Aug. 2001: Rocking The World! What Rahman's Victory Means To Boxing. Plus: Barrera-Hamed, Oscar De La Hoya, Mount Whitaker, *Friday Night Fights*.
Sept. 2001 (108-Page Extra): Exclusive RING Interview—Hasim Rahman: "Nobody's Taking My Titles!" Plus: 20 all-time greatest lightweights, Pat Valentino, Hopkins & King, Jones & Arum.
Oct. 2001: Trinidad vs. Hopkins: Middleweight Unification Superfight Analysis & Predictions. Plus: Emanuel Steward, Joe Calzaghe, Ali's opponents, Rahman & King.
Nov. 2001 (108-Page Extra): THE RING 100: Ranking The Best Fighters In The World. Plus: Oscar De La Hoya, Jesus Chavez, Hall of Fame (Sugar Ramos, Ismael Laguna), Luther Rawlings, 15-rounders.
Dec. 2001: The Rock Promises Another Shock! "I'm Gonna Knock Lennox Out Again!" Plus: David Reid, Jones-Gonzalez, McCline-Grant, Jackie Graves, ring deaths.
Jan. 2002 (108-Page Extra): Oscar Feeds His Critics: Did He Chicken Out Against Vargas? Plus: Wladimir Klitschko, Chris Byrd, 20 greatest featherweights, "Caveman" Bob Moha.
Feb. 2002: How I Shocked The World, By Bernard Hopkins. Plus: Marco Antonio Barrera, Fernando Vargas, Francisco Bojado, boxers and national crises.
March 2002 (108-Page Extra): Is Tyson Ready To Regain The Title? Plus: Kostya Tszyu, Floyd Mayweather, Bernard Hopkins, Eddie Futch, fitness, ahead for 2002.
April 2002: Time For Tyson: The Final Step In Lewis' Legacy. Plus: Muhammad Ali, Barrera-Morales II preview, Ron Stander, THE RING's championship policy.
May 2002 (108-Page Extra): Bernard Hopkins—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awards, Holyfield-Ruiz III, 2000 Olympians, Eric Harding, "Silent" Hairston.
June 2002: Lennox Lewis: I'll End The Tyson "Freak Show!" Plus: Forrest-Mosley, Freitas-Casamayor, De La Hoya & Vargas, Hagler & Leonard.
July 2002 (108-Page Extra): Exclusive Preview: The Oscar-Fernando Hatefest. Plus: Hopkins & Monzon, Francisco Bojado, Buddy McGirt, Lionel Rose, State of the Game.
Aug. 2002: Lewis vs. Tyson: Who Will Win ... And What Happens Next. Plus: Michael Moorer, Jeff Fenech, Charley Parham, Rafael & Juan Manuel Marquez.
Sept. 2002 (108-Page Extra): Vernon Forrest—Next Step In The Master Plan: End Mosley's Career. Plus: Sugar Ray Leonard, Roberto Duran, Ricardo Mayorga, 20 greatest lightweights.
Oct. 2002: Tito' Back ... And He's "Going To Make Hopkins Pay!" Plus: Ward-Gatti, Bouie Fisher, controversial scoring, ruining prospects.
Nov. 2002 (108-Page Extra): Monster Mashed! Can A New Tyson Emerge From The Rubble? Plus: THE RING 100, Evander Holyfield, Don King, Billy Joiner, junior welters.
Dec. 2002: Ward & Gatti Look To Hit Another Grand Slam! Plus: Forrest-Mosley II, Barrera-Morales II, Manny Pacquiao, Tim Austin, Nino Benvenuti, Mark Taffet.

☐ Mar/82
☐ Aug/82

☐ Feb/83
☐ Mar/83
☐ Apr/83
☐ May/83
☐ Jun/83
☐ Aug/83
☐ Sep/83
☐ Nov/83
All 8 $31

☐ Feb/84
☐ Jun/84
☐ Jul/84
☐ Aug/84
☐ Sep/84
☐ Oct/84
☐ Dec/84
All 7 $28

☐ Jan/85
☐ Feb/85
☐ Mar/85
☐ May/85
☐ Jun/85
☐ Aug/85
☐ Oct/85
☐ Nov/85
☐ Dec/85
All 9 $34

☐ Jan/86
☐ Mar/86
☐ Apr/86
☐ May/86
☐ Jun/86
☐ Jul/86
☐ Aug/86
☐ Sep/86
☐ Dec/86
All 9 $34

☐ Apr/87
☐ May/87
☐ Jun/87
☐ Jul/87
☐ Aug/87
☐ Sep/87
☐ Nov/87
☐ Dec/87
All 8 $31

☐ Jan/88
☐ Feb/88
☐ Mar/88
☐ Apr/88
☐ May/88
☐ Sep/88
☐ Oct/88
☐ Nov/88
All 8 $31

☐ Jan/89
☐ Feb/89
☐ Mar/89
☐ May/89
All 4 $18

☐ Jan/90
☐ Feb/90
☐ Mar/90
☐ Apr/90
☐ May/90
☐ Jun/90
☐ Jul/90
☐ Aug/90
☐ Sep/90
☐ Nov/90
☐ Dec/90
All 11 $40

☐ Jan/91
☐ Mar/91
☐ Apr/91
☐ Jun/91
☐ Jul/91
☐ Aug/91
☐ Oct/91
☐ Dec/91
All 8 $31

☐ Jan/92
☐ May/92
☐ Jul/92
☐ Sep/92
☐ Nov/92
All 5 $22

☐ Feb/93
☐ Apr/93
☐ May/93
All 3 $14

☐ Apr/94
☐ May/94
☐ Aug/94
☐ Oct/94
☐ Dec/94
All 5 $22

☐ Jan/95
☐ May/95
☐ Jun/95
☐ Jul/95
☐ Oct/95
☐ Dec/95
vWint/95
All 7 $28

☐ Jan/96
☐ Feb/96
☐ May/96
☐ Sep/96
☐ Nov/96
☐ Dec/96
All 6 $25

☐ May/97
☐ Jun/97
☐ Jul/97
☐ Oct/97
☐ Nov/97
All 5 $22

☐ Jan/98
☐ Feb/98
☐ Mar/98
☐ Apr/98
☐ Jun/98
☐ Jul/98
☐ Aug/98
☐ Sep/98
☐ Oct/98
All 9 $34

☐ Jan/99
☐ Feb/99
☐ Mar/99
☐ Apr/99
☐ May/99
☐ Jun/99
☐ Jul/99
☐ Aug/99
☐ Sep/99
☐ Oct/99
☐ Dec/99
☐ Hol/99
All 12 $43

☐ Jan/00
☐ Mar/00
☐ Apr/00
☐ May/00
☐ Jun/00
☐ Jul/00
☐ Aug/00
☐ Sep/00
☐ Oct/00
☐ Dec/00
All 10 $37

☐ Jan/01
☐ Feb/01
☐ Mar/01
☐ Apr/01
☐ May/01
☐ Jun/01
☐ Jul/01
☐ Aug/01
☐ Sep/01
☐ Oct/01
☐ Nov/01
☐ Dec/01
All 12 $43

☐ Jan/02
☐ Feb/02
☐ Mar/02
☐ Apr/02
☐ May/02
☐ Jun/02
☐ Jul/02
☐ Aug/02
☐ Sep/02
☐ Oct/02
☐ Nov/02
☐ Dec/02
All 12 $43

In case of sellout, indicate two substitute choices: ____________ ____________

Please send me the back issues I have checked off. I have enclosed $5 for each issue as payment in full or provided my credit card number to charge my purchase ($20 minimum). Send To:

LONDON PUBLISHING CO.
P.O. BOX 910
FT. WASHINGTON, PA 19034

ONLY $5 EACH

☐ Check or money order (enclosed and payable to London Publishing Co.)

☐ VISA # ______________________________

☐ MasterCard # ______________________________

Expiration Date: __/__
MO/YR

Name ______________________________

Address ______________________________ Apt. ______

City ______________________________

State ______________________________ Zip ______________

For all orders except the U.S., you must add $1.50 for every back issue to be sent via surface mail, and $3.00 for every back issue to be sent airmail. Int'l money order in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

5976/09-02

BARRERA & TAPIA

Different Directions To The Same Destination

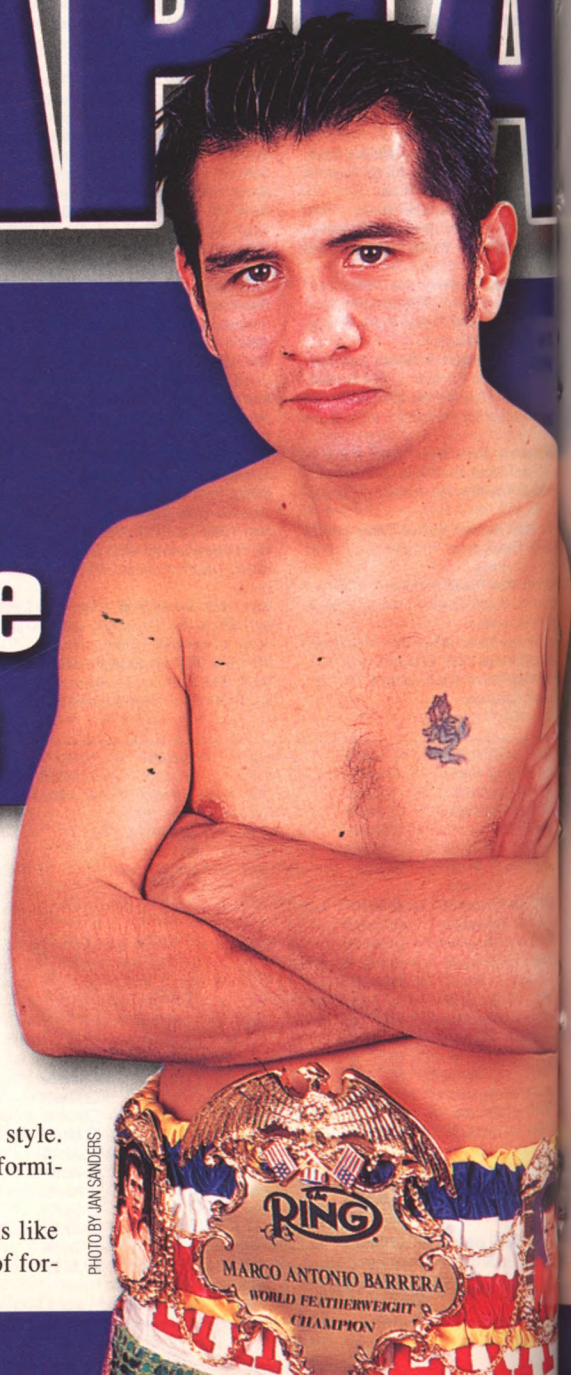


PHOTO BY JAN SANDERS

By Ivan Goldman

Going in opposite directions, Marco Antonio Barrera and Johnny Tapia passed each other in the night last November, trading punches for 12 rounds in Las Vegas and then resuming their journeys. Their paths will no doubt cross again in the Hall of Fame.

Barrera, one of the finest fighters of his time, is not finished making his mark. At age 28, he's still adding polish to his boxer-puncher style. He's not as consistently exciting as he used to be, but he's even more formidable.

Tapia's best fights are behind him. Those that remain—and it looks like there will be too many—will likely resemble the last several contests of for-

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

It was clear throughout the fight that Barrera was stronger, quicker, and hit harder. But Tapia took everything that Barrera dished out, including this left hook, and kept his record of never being stopped intact. Though basically a one-sided fight, it never degenerated into a rout.

mer icons such as Joe Louis, Sugar Ray Robinson, and Roberto Duran. They won't detract from his legacy, because everyone will understand they don't represent the fighter he was.

It was a decent idea pitting these two great warriors against each other. The bout was entertaining, insofar as one-sided contests go. It also told us nothing we didn't already know.

Tapia's instincts, talent, and fighting heart were betrayed by his 35-year-old body, which did just about everything a millisecond too late. "I did everything I could do," he said later.

He chased Barrera all over the ring. And he paid a price almost every step of the way, losing the unanimous decision without controversy. For good reasons, there were no knockdowns.

At featherweight, Tapia doesn't have the punch to get Barrera in serious trouble. And probably no one has what it takes to get Tapia in serious trouble. He's an old tiger who's seen it all and felt it all. His face and body are made of the same leather as the gloves that pound him.

Tapia loves the game so much he seems to derive as much pleasure from getting hit with a clever shot as the fans do watching it. The only way you can hurt him is outside the ring. There the orphaned street kid from the Albuquerque barrio has suffered enough pain for several human beings.

Tapia's no longer the same fighter who used to perform a graceful, vicious ballet that blended offense and defense at all the right times, leaving opponents befuddled, angry, and humiliated. Because he interrupted his career at age 23 to chase the cocaine dragon, we probably missed what should have been Tapia's peak. When he returned in 1994 he was 27.

Ironically, Barrera has also seen two careers, first as a slugger, now as a slickster. His road wasn't easy either, but he didn't need to take it. The son of a film executive, he grew up in a wealthy suburb of Mexico City. Yet he turned pro at age 15, fighting full-grown men and beating them. Getting a month between fights was a luxury. Sometimes he fought once a week.

Barrera was born with a big punch and he used it. Not many opponents could stand up to it, so he didn't learn to get cute. His forte was the traditional Mexican left hook to the liver, which he used like a Taser to paralyze opponents. He stepped in close, squared up, and banged. Nothing fancy, but quick, brutal, and effective.

His manager, Ricardo Maldonado, took his fighter across the border and signed him up with Forum Boxing, a boxing promotions company owned by boxing fan and multimillionaire Jerry Buss, who also owned the Los Angeles Lakers.

Barrera became a big attraction in Southern California as he punched his way up the junior feather division. In February 1996, the very first HBO *Boxing After Dark* show pitted Barrera against the tough, tricky Kennedy McKinney. Their magnificent, all-action

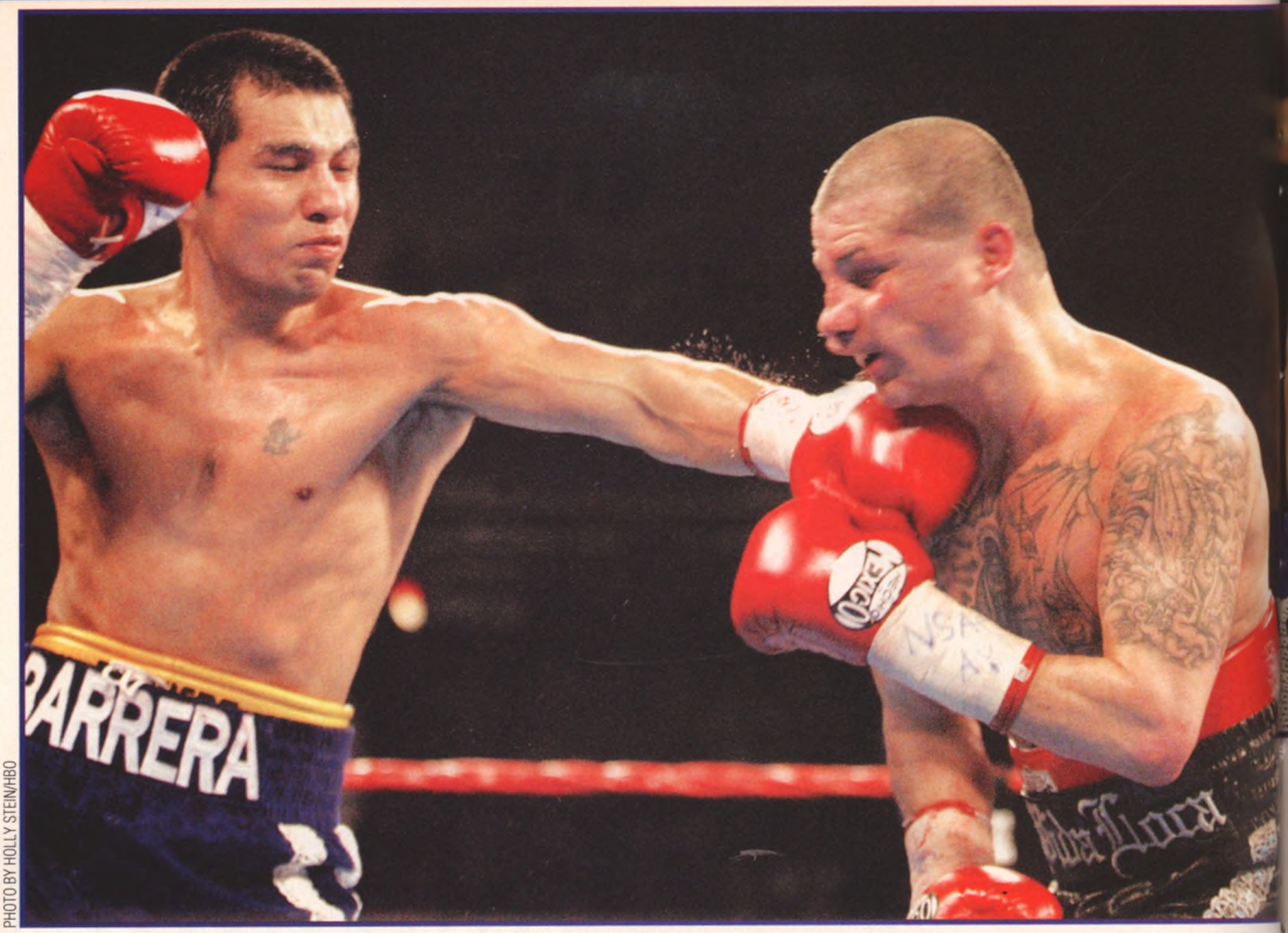


PHOTO BY HOLLY STEIN/HBO

Barrera's main weapon against Tapia was the jab, which he landed with force and precision. According to CompuBox, Barrera connected with 179 of the 467 jabs he threw, while Tapia landed just 17 of 221 thrown. Overall, Barrera landed 323 punches to Tapia's 124.

contest ended with Barrera stopping the game, splendid McKinney in round 12.

They say if it ain't broke, don't fix it. So the undefeated Barrera continued wowing the fans with his slugging style, and Maldonado continued throwing him into frequent matches. Barrera poured on a lot of pain and shook off the shots he took along the way.

In November 1996, his fifth outing that year, he ran into Junior Jones, who moved around him throwing from unfamiliar angles. Avoiding Barrera's deadly hook, Jones stopped him in round five.

Barrera made the same mistake that Shane Mosley would later make against Vernon Forrest. He went straight back into a rematch with the man who beat him. Fighting tentatively, he lost a unanimous decision.

When most fighters can't beat the best, they learn to live with it. Not Barrera. After eight years as a pro, he returned to the gym and relearned his craft, adding stealth and more sophisticated movement to his style. But two years ago he discarded his new craft

Ever the warrior, Tapia never stopped trying. He tagged Barrera with some good punches, but could never hurt the featherweight champion. At age 35, Tapia is clearly not the fighter he was when he beat Danny Romero in 1997.

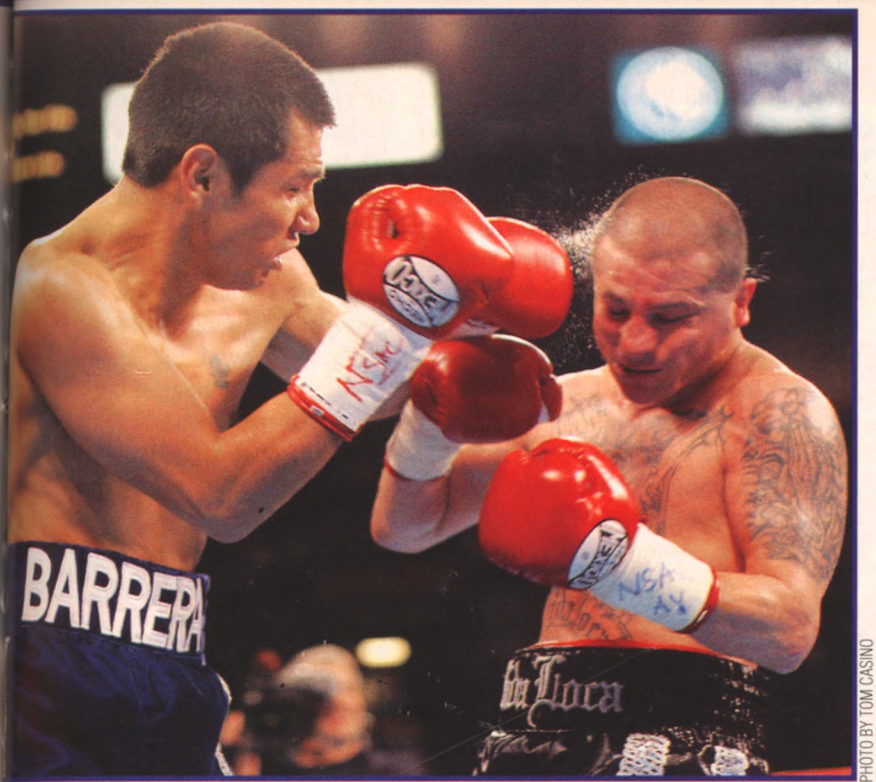


PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

Is this any way to treat a friend? Barrera distorts Tapia face with a left hook. It's no secret that they are friends outside of the ring, and some observers felt that Barrera held back to a degree because he didn't want to hurt his buddy too badly.

man's tools to slug it out for 12 rounds with his arch-rival, the sensational Erik Morales of Tijuana. It was THE RING's 2000 Fight of the Year. Most ringsiders thought Barrera pulled out a narrow victory, but he lost the split decision.

Barrera returned to fighting slippery. But with three losses on his record and lots of wars in his past, he was a considerable underdog the next year when he faced off with Prince Naseem Hamed in a featherweight match. Employing a perfect fight plan, Barrera stayed on his toes and measured out a polished, violent beating to the lead-fisted Prince. The victory resurrected Barrera's career and put him back on top.

In his rematch with Morales, Barrera for the most part refused to get drawn into the war Morales wanted. Barrera won a decision many ringsiders thought should have gone to Morales.

Barrera's people say he isn't likely to stay in the game much longer. He wants meaningful fights. That's where Tapia came in. Tapia's people were negotiating to fight The Prince when Hamed pulled out. They very quickly made a deal to face Barrera instead. These are two fighters who don't manufacture financial disputes so they can duck out of tough fights.

Tapia always has been characterized by his unabashed passion for the sport. It's the regimen of the gym and the adrenaline rush of the fights themselves that chase off his inner demons. He loves his opponents. Without them, where would he be?

Tapia constantly touches gloves, even moments after they fouled him. He also loves to put on a show, and is genuinely energized by the enthusiasm of the crowd.

In its first phase, Tapia's career was characterized by blinding speed. He was a hard-hitting junior bantamweight, though he lacked one-punch kayo power. In Career Two, Tapia was not quite as quick, but much more clever, with improved footwork and more polished defense. His return from a three-year layoff as a more refined fighter is exquisitely unique. Barrera's successfully switching from slugger to boxer in mid-career was almost as unusual.

Tapia's signature fight was his decision victory five years ago over Danny Romero. Romero, the rising young star

(Continued on page 32)

STRIKE™

IT'S YOUR IDENTITY

$100
SILVER

$799
14K GOLD

$2,250
14K GOLD

$45
SILVER

$2,000
14K GOLD

ALL DESIGNS IN THE STRIKE™ COLLECTION ARE EXCLUSIVE AND PROTECTED BY COPYRIGHT LAWS.

EXCLUSIVE RETAIL DISTRIBUTORS AVAILABLE IN N.Y.

AVAILABLE IN SILVER, 14K, 18K, OR PLATINUM.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT
WWW.STRIKE-INC.COM
TO SEE OUR ENTIRE COLLECTION

TO ORDER OR FOR INFORMATION, CALL (212) 471-4950

© 1999-2002 STRIKE, INC., AND ALL OF ITS PRODUCTS ARE COPY RIGHT PROTECTED. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Barrera & Tapia

(Continued from page 31)

with explosive punching power, was favored over Tapia, whose crazy life was celebrated on his trunks with the words, "Mi Vida Loca." But Romero could never catch Tapia clean, and Tapia stayed just close enough to torture his cross-town rival with blistering combinations.

Later Tapia would lose two close fights to the popular Paulie Ayala of Texas. The first one, a toe-to-toe marvel, was THE RING's 1999 Fight of the Year.

Tapia won an alphabet title from Manuel Medina in April 2002 in a split decision. It was a victory he didn't deserve. Perhaps for the first time, Tapia showed clear signs of age. His second career has been managed by his wife, Teresa, who was instrumental in getting him off drugs. He's had enough promoters and trainers to make the lengthening roster a standing joke. In his fight with Barrera, his barely known promoter let Forum Boxing do the heavy lifting.

Buss is no longer with Forum Boxing, which is now basically a paper outfit headed by John Jackson. Jackson was Buss' vice president, and these days also works as an offensive coach for UNLV's football team. A well-known public relations raconteur refers to Forum Boxing as Barrera Boxing, which pretty much signifies its limited scope and mission.

Promoting Barrera-Tapia was mostly left to HBO and the MGM Grand. It drew more than 7,700 fans, a respectable number, but there should have been more.

Barrera, who could have had Morales' WBC belt, doesn't. He refused to pay the sanctioning fee. Tapia, who won the IBF belt from Medina, lost it because he insisted on fighting Barrera instead of an IBF contender. Barrera kept THE RING's world championship belt.

This fight demonstrated just how foolish and ugly alphabet politics are in the 21st century. Before stripping Tapia, the IBF had offered to "consider" letting him keep his belt, providing he pay a nonrefundable $20,000 fee. The Tapias wisely said no thanks.

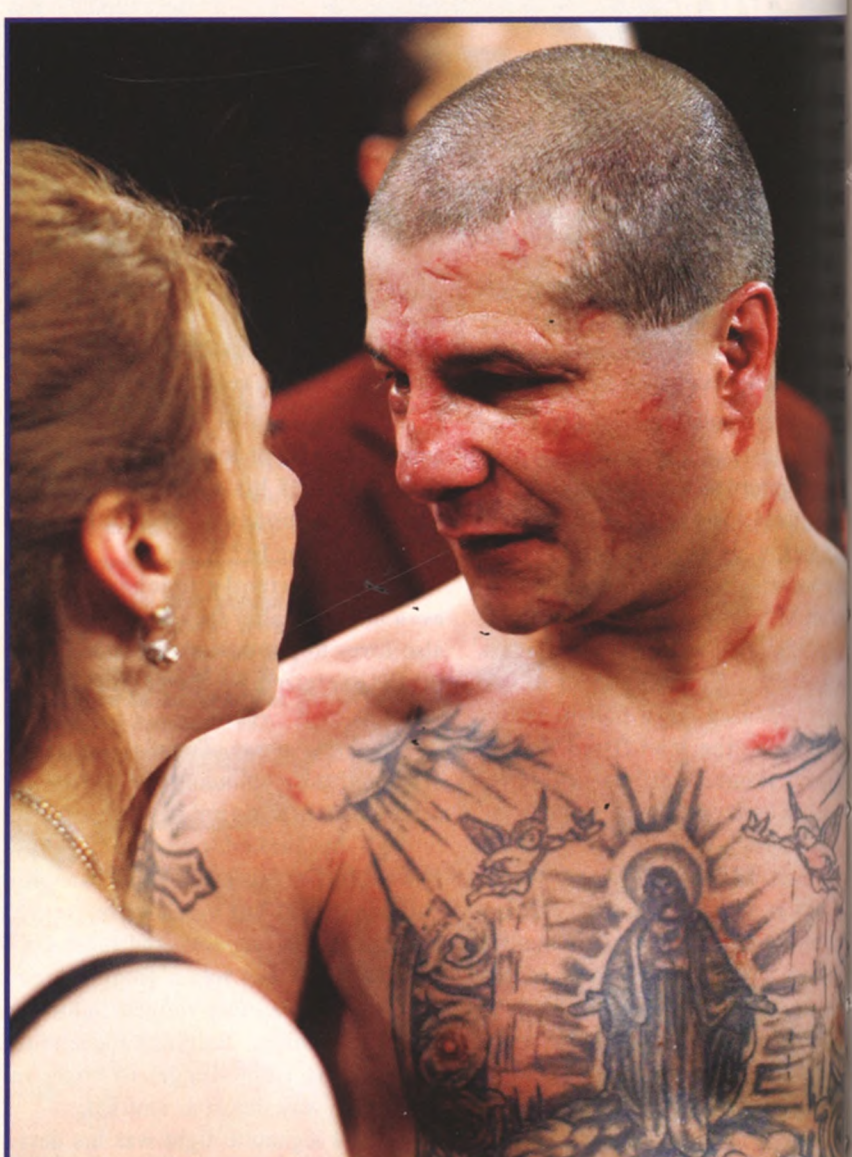
Tapia used to have a magnificent jab, but his got worse, and Barrera's is now one of the best in the sport. He caught Tapia with it all night. From the opening bell, Barrera connected more and got hit less.

Tapia and his trainer, Freddie Roach, had thought Barrera would use his size and come right at Johnny. Instead he used his reach and blistering jab to fight a controlled fight. Barrera dictated the pace. It took until round six before the two great bodypunchers finally took it inside for a prolonged exchange. Tapia, the initiator, got the best of it.

Barrera's corner "kept telling me between rounds, 'Don't get crazy,'" Barrera said later. In round nine, Ta excited the crowd with a combination, not one punch landed cleanly. In the 1 Barrera caught Tapia with a hard combi tion that included a deadly uppercut, wh he threw sparingly but with great effect night. Moments later, Tapia landed overhand right, but with far less force. T round ended with a furious exchange t belonged to Barrera.

To start round 12, Tapia didn't j touch gloves, he hugged his friend— then lost the round. Judge Chu Giampa scored it 116-112, and B Graham and Dave Morretti saw it 1 110.

At the postfight press conference, t two fighters complimented each oth



A battered Tapia shares a moment with his wife-manager, Teresa, after the Barrera bo Despite the fact that he is taking more punishment now than ever before in his long caree the still-popular Tapia intends to keep fighting.

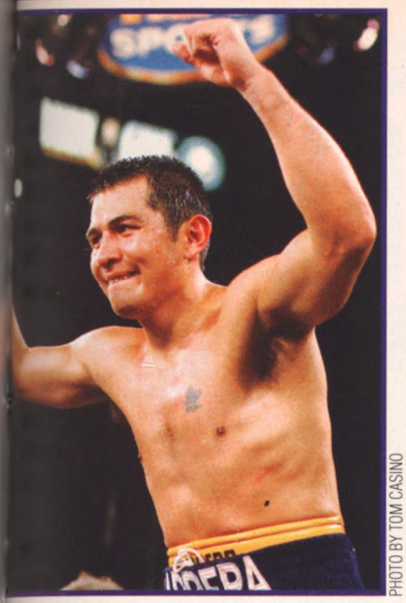


PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

Barrera celebrates his relatively easy victory. The world featherweight champion hardly looked like he'd been in a fight at the end of the 12-rounder.

profusely. Just about everyone defined Tapia as a "warrior." It was meant as a compliment, but also to describe a tough, determined competitor who was doomed before the opening bell.

Just 2½ years earlier, Barrera, 56-3 (39), earned only $200,000 for his war with Morales. The marketplace is fickle and knows no mercy. Against Tapia he earned over $1-million. Tapia, 52-3-2 (28), received a reported $755,000.

Barrera would love a rematch with Hamed (more easy money) and will almost certainly get one with Morales. Possibly their third fight will prove one of them is better than the other, but most likely it will be close again. Barrera's retirement may come sooner than fans expect.

Tapia and his wife also spoke wistfully of a possible match with Hamed. They warded off all questions about retirement. When a reporter politely noted that Johnny was getting hit with a lot more punches than he used to, he said he's a "big family man. I love my wife and kids. And I want a check every month."

Teresa may fear her husband won't thrive or even survive without a boxing career to hold him together. Retirement will be his last great contest, and perhaps the toughest of all. When it comes, he, like Barrera, will be sorely missed. ■

Ivan Goldman is THE RING's West Coast correspondent.

THE RING & KO PRESENT

GIANT-SIZED FOLDOUT SPECIALS

Includes. . .A LIFE-SIZE 22" X 32" EIGHT-PAGE SUPER CENTERFOLD!

Stories, Records, Fight Facts, Analyses, And More!

- TYSON vs. SPINKS
- LEONARD vs. HEARNS II
- LEONARD vs. DURAN III
- MIKE TYSON & THE HEAVYWEIGHT GREATS
- FRANK BRUNO & THE BATTLING BRITONS

ONLY $5
$21.95
FOR ALL FIVE!

Send money order or make check payable to:

London Publishing Co.
P.O. Box 910
Ft. Washington, PA 19034

The RING & KO PRESENT

Please send me the *Color Special* I've checked below. I am enclosing $5 for each one I'm ordering, or $21.95 for all five.

☐ Tyson vs. Spinks
☐ Leonard vs. Hearns II
☐ Leonard vs. Duran III
☐ Tyson & The Heavyweight Greats
☐ Frank Bruno & The Battling Britons

Name_____

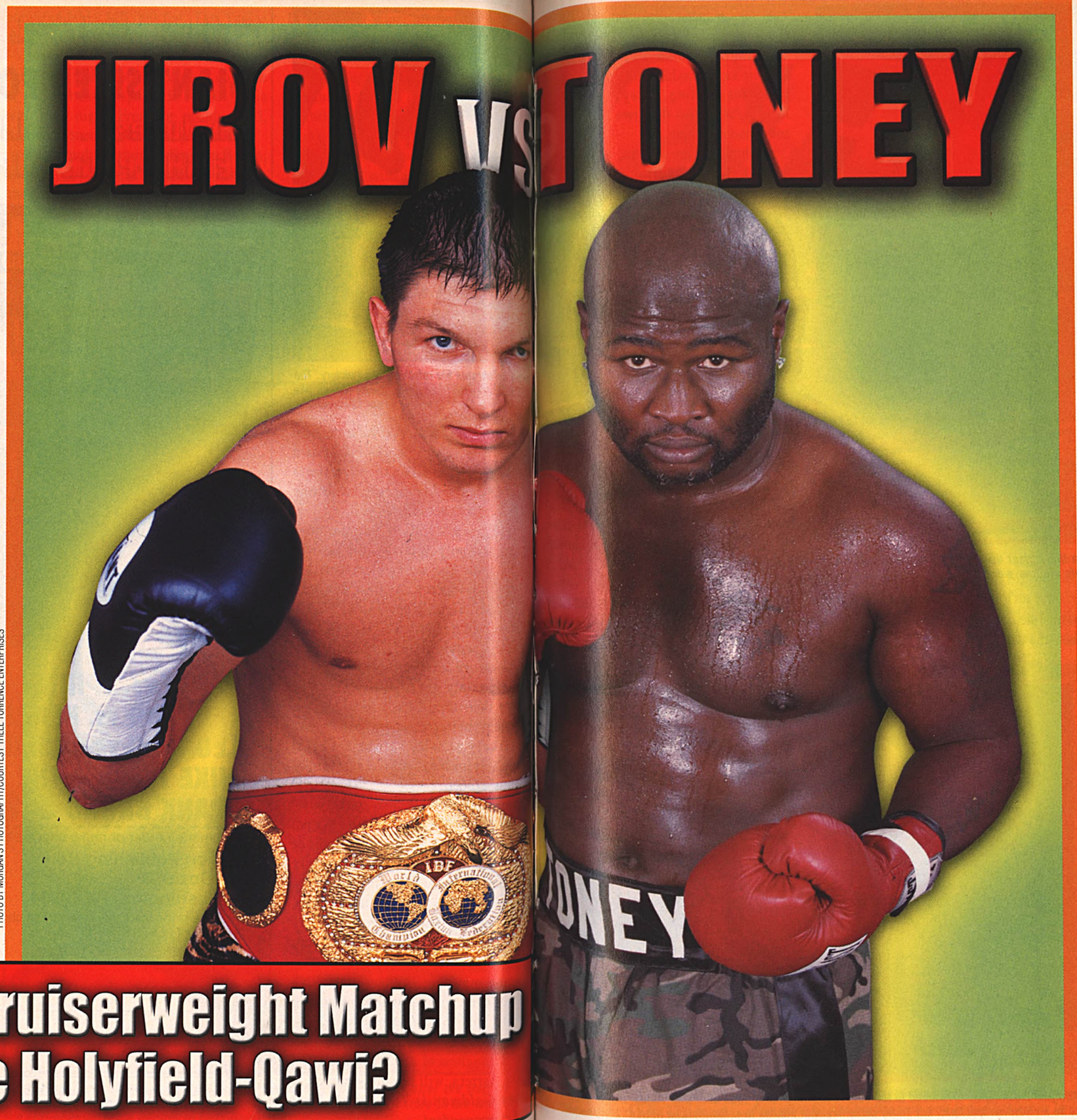
Address_____Apt._____

City_____State____Zip_____

For all orders outside the U.S., you must add $1.50 for every issue to be delivered by surface mail, or $3 for every issue to be sent air mail. International money orders in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

5974/08-02

JIROV VS TONEY



The Best Cruiserweight Matchup Since Holyfield-Qawi?

By David Mayo

Because they are legitimate fighters, Vassiliy Jirov and James Toney have failed in their most recent attempts to enjoin the Roy Jones sweepstakes. But because they were shunned by Jones, they found each other, and now the most highly regarded titleholder in his weight division and the biggest marquee name in the same division will embark on a rarity indeed: a cruiserweight fight with oomph.

One of boxing's most pizzazz-bereft divisions gets an enormous boost January 25, when Jirov, the 1996 Olympic gold medalist who can break down a liver faster than vodka, meets the sage two-division former titleholder Toney, whose vast knowledge and experience present by far the biggest threat yet to the unbeaten Jirov.

They are scheduled to fight as the co-feature to Vernon Forrest's first HBO appearance since signing a multi-fight contract, which is testimony to the quality of the Jirov-Toney matchup. It is not like boxing's premier pay-cable television network to pursue cruiserweight bouts, and yet Jirov will make his third appearance on HBO, suggesting that the native of Kazakhstan has the talent potential to overcome some limitations of his heritage and weight division.

Add in Toney, who has retained his viability and marketability despite not holding an alphabet title since losing to Jones in 1994, and you have what many are billing as the most appealing matchup in the 190-pound division since the Evander Holyfield-Dwight Muhammad Qawi fight in 1986.

USA Today's Dan Rafael thinks highly of Jirov, and has written about some of his unusual training techniques as an amateur in Kazakhstan—coaches boating him out to the middle of a lake, then dropping him there to swim to shore, or putting him in a narrow hallway with a door at one end and a German Shepherd at the other, and forcing Jirov to sprint to safety before the dog could catch him. Even with that kind of toughness instilled in Jirov, Rafael pays testimony to Toney's staying power when he suggests Jirov-Toney is a tossup.

"Holyfield-Qawi was a great fight period, regardless of the weight division, and I think Jirov-Toney is the best cruiserweight fight that can be made today," Rafael said. "I don't think there's any doubt about it, as far as name recognition, and championship-level guys fighting each other. I can't wait for it. I don't know who's going to win. There's a case to be made for both guys. Jirov is young, he's strong, he's the more powerful puncher, but you can also look at it that Jirov has not been the most active guy, and that could help Toney. And Toney has looked good his last couple of fights, and he knows a lot of tricks. He's just a very cagey guy. I think it's a good fight, a truly pick-'em, 50-50 fight."

In some ways, it's also a relatively predictable fight, insofar as the style each must use to counteract the other: Jirov's pressure against Toney's pick-his-spots stalking; Jirov's bodypunching acumen—he might be the most dedicated fighter in that art today—against Toney's right-hand power.

How will Toney stand up against the pressure of his best cruiserweight opponent? How will Jirov survive if Toney—who never lost in three fights with Mike McCallum, such a historically fearsome bodypuncher that he was nicknamed "The Bodysnatcher"—walks right through Jirov's body assault? And what will Toney do if Jirov grins through his best right hand and keeps coming?

Adolpho Washington is well-positioned to suggest answers to those questions before they play out.

Jirov and Toney have four common opponents. Three of them, Earl Butler, Terry McGroom, and Saul Montana, were knocked out quickly by one man or the other. Only Washington lasted extended rounds with both Jirov, to whom he lost a 10-round decision in 2001, and Toney, to whom he lost on a 10th-round TKO in 1999.

"One thing Jirov better do is stay away from that right hand," said Washington, a

PHOTO BY MORGAN'S PHOTOGRAPHY/COURTESY THELL TORRENCE ENTERPRISES

PHOTO BY JAN SANDERS/COURTESY GOOSSEN-TUTOR PROMOTIONS

PHOTO BY PAT ORR

Jirov has shown plenty of power during his reign as IBF cruiser titlist, including a first-round kayo of Terry McGroom in March 2001. But none of his victims were as accomplished or as well-regarded as two-division former titleholder Toney.

former IBF cruiserweight titleholder. "Put the pressure on Toney, press the pace, make him fight. If I were training him, that's what I'd tell him to do."

Washington's loss to Jirov was a nasty foulfest. Washington said he remembers little about it because he was concussed by a first-round clash of heads, and never has watched the tape.

"I do know Jirov can punch a little bit to the body, but he's not a big puncher, which surprised me after everybody talked about how hard he punches," Washington said. "His best quality is he'll get in shape for the fight. And of course, that can be Toney's problem.

"If it goes to a decision, I'll give the edge to Jirov. I think Toney has to knock him out to win. Toney is not the busiest fighter in the world. He'll sit there and work and pick his shots. Jirov is more of a pressure guy. But if the best of both guys show up, I give the edge to Toney. If Toney is in shape, I think he might just catch Jirov with one of those right hands. I think it'll be a good fight. But if Toney trains the way he did when he fought me, he's the winner."

Washington's trainer, Malcolm Garrett, said any attempt to handicap Jirov-Toney based on the result of their fights with Washington should carry an asterisk. Garrett said Washington was well-prepared for fighting Toney, but took the Jirov fight on less than two weeks notice and without training.

"I think if Toney trains, and I believe he will, he'll beat Jirov," Garrett said. "He's going to have to dig down. He's going to have to be the real Toney. Toney is capable of beating Jirov, but Toney is also his own worst enemy because he doesn't like to train.

"But when you compare the two fighters, Toney has more ability than Jirov. Jirov is a tough guy, but when you're in against a real world-class fighter like Toney, that toughness only goes so far.

"Toney is a student of boxing. He knows boxing. But he only does what he has to. In a way, that's why I think he'll beat Jirov. He knows this is his last shot, and if he doesn't win, no one is going to do him any favors after this fight. Listen, if anyone owed him any favors, if he was really connected, he wouldn't have had to struggle the last few years. He would have had his title shot by now. But it's hard for a tough guy to get a fight."

That the 28-year-old Jirov is left-handed seems only of minor consequence. Toney, 34, has defeated slick left-handed stylists like Michael Nunn and Reggie

Adolpho Washington is rescued in the 10th round of his July 1999 bout with Toney. It was supposed to be a cruiserweight fight, but Toney came in seven pounds over the division limit of 190 pounds.

Jirov won the IBF belt in June 1999 by stopping Arthur Williams in the seventh round. Since then, he's tallied six successful defenses, all but one of them inside of the distance.

Johnson, but Jirov's attack is nothing like theirs. Jirov figures to press, bore in, rip the body, and then work the attack up and down. That he's a southpaw is rather incidental.

The big question with Toney, as always, is his dedication to training. That was evident as far back as his loss to Jones, when Toney dehydrated himself to make the 168-pound limit, but unofficially weighed 185 pounds on the night of the fight. The energy drain contributed to a dominating performance by Jones in what many perceived beforehand—as they do Jirov-Toney today—as a dead-even match.

"I would have to actually see Toney on the week of the fight before I made a prediction," said *USA Today's* Rafael. "If he comes into the fight in the best shape possible, I think he might beat Jirov. If he comes in like he did against Roy Jones, when he had to come way down in weight at the last minute, then I think you have to give the edge to Jirov."

Bruce Trampler is as keen as anyone outside the immediate Jirov camp as to understanding which style best complements Jirov's. Jirov, 31-0 (27), fought his first 25 bouts under Top Rank's promotional banner, and Trampler, as a Top Rank matchmaker, made the majority of those matches.

Trampler likewise contends that the Jirov-Toney outcome hinges largely on how seriously Toney, 65-4-2 (42), takes the fight. Toney, after all, was THE RING's Fighter of the Year way back in 1991, and has defeated the likes of McCallum, Nunn, "Prince" Charles Williams, and Iran Barkley, a level of competition Jirov might never equal. But one also must consider Toney's languid and indifferent side, which allowed him to lose to Drake Thadzi and twice to Montell Griffin, and win sluggishly numerous other times.

"Jirov is going against a guy who could've been one of the all-time greats if he had the dedication and the character for it," Trampler said. "Toney was a throwback guy, an old-school guy. He had more skills than almost anybody in the last decade. But Jirov is going to test him. It's too close to call. I can see the fight in my mind, Jirov on him, pressing him, whaling away, Toney picking his spots and being cute. If Jirov wins, it will be on sheer volume. If Toney wins, it will be because Toney exposes Jirov as a raw, crude guy, and because Toney was more savvy in there."

Top Rank signed Jirov after he won the light heavyweight gold medal at the Atlanta Olympics, but even after he stopped Arthur Williams in his 1999 HBO debut and came back three months later with a liver-shot kayo of Dale Brown on

Memory Lane: Most people think that Toney peaked as a middleweight and super middleweight, back in the days when he was beating such well-known fighters as Iran Barkley (pictured).

the Felix Trinidad-Oscar De La Hoya pay-per-view show, Jirov still drew no interest as a television main-eventer beyond the ESPN level.

Jirov eventually hooked up with Sugar Ray Leonard Boxing, but that relationship quickly soured, and in a July '02 housecleaning, the fighter filed lawsuits in Phoenix against SRL Boxing, Panix Promotions, manager Ivaylo Gotsev, and attorney Geoffrey Fried, making a wide variety of claims including an unpaid fight purse and a forged contract. Jirov now is advised by noted concert promoter Al Hayman, who also advises Forrest.

Those issues, in addition to the once-promising pursuit of Jones that proved fruitless, will have kept Jirov out of the ring for a career-long 358 days by the time he fights Toney. Both have had extended periods of inactivity—Toney was off for 21 months from 1997-'99—but Jirov's is more recent, and immediately precedes the showdown with Toney, who showed flashes of his old brilliance in a seventh-round knockout of Jason Robinson in August.

James "Buddy" McGirt, one of the hottest trainers in boxing, is not involved with either fighter. But McGirt doesn't think many of the aforementioned issues matter—not the inactivity, not Toney's training attentiveness, not Jirov's body-punching prowess. Only Toney's experience and expertise matters.

"I think James Toney beats him flat. Just too much know-how," McGirt said. "Jirov

Thell Torrence, who learned his trade under Hall of Famer Eddie Futch, is now training Jirov. T IBF cruiser king is also now being advised by concert promoter Al Hayman, who serves in a simi capacity with welterweight champion Vernon Forrest.

PHOTO BY JAN SANDERS/COURTESY GOOSSEN-TUTOR PROMOTIONS

Toney, garbed in his Santa suit, has teamed up with veteran promoter Dan Goossen for one last run at the title. Both have had their ups and downs in the business, but have also shown great resiliency.

is a bodypuncher, they say, but Toney slick, Toney understands what's at stak and I think he'll rise to the occasion for t one. It's a tougher fight if Toney isn't t best he can be. But he still wins. It's just easier night for him if he's ready. Toney just too slick, man. Toney knows how lure you in and sucker you up."

Trampler, along with anyone hopi for a cruiserweight fight with actu intrigue, hopes for more.

"They're both good guys, I'm gl they're getting the opportunity, and it's good fight," Trampler said. "I hope it's 12-round draw and we get to see it agai We all deserve it—the fans and the figh ers."

David Mayo covers boxing for t Grand Rapids (Michigan) Press and is regular contributor to this magazine.

The RING PREDICTS . . .

WHAT'S AHEAD FOR 2003

Section Compiled By Nigel Collins, Eric Raskin, Joe Santoliquito, & William Dettloff

HBO analyst Larry Merchant calls boxing the "theater of the unexpected," and more often than not the phrase is totally appropriate. Followers of the Sweet Science seldom know what to expect next, and that's a big part of the sport's charm. But for reasons that are not entirely apparent, we still can't resist trying to figure out what the future holds, and it is in this spirit that THE RING presents its second annual look into the year ahead.

Of course, part of trying to predict the future actually falls into the "wishful thinking" category, which is certainly the case in the first segment of this section, "10 Fights We'd Like To See In 2003." We didn't get everything we asked for last year, but the four fights that did occur—Oscar De la Hoya-Fernando Vargas, Marco Antonio Barrera-Erik Morales II, Paulie Ayala-Bones Adams II, Micky Ward-Arturo Gatti—were among the highlights of the year. Hopefully, we'll be just as lucky in '03.

We've taken a few more risks in the rest of the section, boldly predicting who will be Fighter of the Year for '03, forecasting the future of THE RING'S new championship policy (which didn't even exist at this time last year), and also naming five hot prospects we believe will have a breakout year.

In addition, we've asked and answered 10 leading questions concerning crucial aspects of the year to come. We did pretty well with this last time, so pay close attention.

All in all, this 15-page package is part pipe dream, part prognostication, and part common sense. But when you put it all together, it gives you a pretty good foundation upon which to approach boxing in 2003. It's impossible to know at this juncture how close we've come to predicting the future, but we've had fun trying, and you're sure to have just as much enjoyment reading what we've come up with.

One note of caution for readers thinking of wagering a dollar or two on the predictions contained in the following pages: THE RING'S one-time French correspondent, Nostrodamus, is no longer on staff.

The RING PREDICTS ...

10 Fights We'd Like To See In 2003

Every year we hear from people who don't know what they're talking about, saying that there aren't any good fights anymore. Yet every year it gets harder to come up with 10 fights we'd like to see. Why? The fighters are beating us to it. All the good fights are getting made.

We couldn't say heading into 2003 that we want to see Johnny Tapia against Marco Antonio Barrera, or Paulie Ayala against Erik Morales, or the sequel to Floyd Mayweather-Jose Luis Castillo. We couldn't ask for Oscar De La Hoya-Fernando Vargas, Lennox Lewis-Mike Tyson, Micky Ward-Arturo Gatti II, or Barrera-Morales II. We couldn't ask for Vivian Harris against Diobelys Hurtado, or DeMarcus Corley against Randall Bailey. They beat us to Vince Phillips against Sharmba Mitchell. They got to Vernon Forrest-Shane Mosley I and II before we could, and to Wladimir Klitschko against Jameel McCline, too. No good fights? Hell, could there possibly be any left?

Fortunately, there are a few good fights that haven't been made yet—or that demand to be made again—and on the following pages, we talk about 10 that we'd like to see happen in 2003. Some have a solid shot of coming off, some don't. Don't worry about it. Only four of the 10 we asked for last year came off, and look at the kind of year it was anyway. No good fights anymore, indeed.

Bernard Hopkins-Oscar De La Hoya

Why We'd Like To See It: This qualifies as an honest-to-goodness superfight. Both guys are winners. Both are among the elite. Sure it seems like a mismatch at first glance. But isn't there a part of you that can envision De La Hoya on the outside, on his toes, moving and jabbing and frustrating Hopkins with his speed? Don't you want to see what happens if De La Hoya can consistently land the hook? And don't you want Hopkins to finally get a giant payday?

Who Would Win And Why: A De La Hoya win is romantic to envision, but unlikely. Hopkins has been a middleweight since he was in diapers. He's bigger than De La Hoya, stronger, nearly as fast, and just as good fundamentally, if not better. Mentally, he's probably tougher than anyone De La Hoya has faced. Make De La Hoya a live underdog if you like—he's earned it. But against Hopkins, his best isn't quite good enough. Hopkins by decision or late stoppage.

Chances Of It Happening: Don't count on seeing Hopkins-De La Hoya in 2003. De La Hoya maintains that he wants rematches with Felix Trinidad, if he can coax him out of retirement, and then Shane Mosley. If De La Hoya and Hopkins meet, it won't be until '04, which works in De La Hoya's favor. Hopkins has to get old sometime, right?

Acelino Freitas-Nate Campbell

Why We'd Like To See It: If you remember how Freitas used to fight, and if you saw Campbell pummel Daniel Alicea in September, you know why this is a great matchup: Both guys are pure punchers. While it's true that Oscar Suarez has turned Freitas into something of a boxer-puncher, the sense here is that once he gets tagged by a hitter—and Campbell clearly is a hitter—Freitas will revert to what he used to. It's what every fighter does. Then it's bombs away.

De La Hoya's kayo of Fernando Vargas moved him a step closer to Hopkins

Who Would Win And Why: Clearly, Freitas has the edge in experience; he's faced much better opposition and even had a near superfight against Joel Casamayor. But up until a year or two ago, Freitas' competition overall wasn't much better than Campbell's is. In fact, Freitas' breakout fight also came against Alicea. Still, he's too seasoned for Campbell at this point and maybe a little too athletic for him too. He'd prevail in a wild slugfest in which both guys would eat some canvas. Freitas by knockout late.

Chances Of It Happening: Campbell has only just broken into the top 10. If he can get a win over a guy in the lower half of the top-10—someone like Carlos Hernandez, maybe—then who knows? There's a positive buzz around him, and sometimes that's all it takes with a willing guy like Freitas. Maybe late in the year, it could happen.

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Freitas boxes to victory against Daniel Attah

Tim Austin-Rafael Marquez

Why We'd Like To See It: Even for the hardcore among us, Austin-Marquez is really the only fight that matters at 118 pounds. Nobody here cares much about Veerapol Sahaprom and Johnny Bredahl, even though you could rate both over Marquez with little argument from us. But it's Marquez we remember in that superb war with Mark Johnson in their first fight, and it's Marquez we remember flattening Johnson in the return. We never did get Austin-Johnson. Austin-Marquez may be the next best thing.

Who Would Win And Why: If you asked us about this fight before Austin disassembled the very capable Adan Vargas last July, we'd have given Marquez a heck of a chance. We suspected the inactivity and the waiting around had started to take a toll on Austin. But he was superb against Vargas—better than we'd seen him in a long time—and that Austin takes a solid decision over Marquez in an exciting, fast-paced battle.

Chances Of It Happening: There's one reason to believe it will, and two reasons to believe it won't. As much as we hate the Alphabet Boys, the fact that the IBF lists Marquez as the mandatory to Austin could force the best high-level fight at bantamweight to happen. But the bad news is that Austin is promoted by Don King, and Marquez is promoted by Bob Arum. Also, Austin said recently that he might finally make the jump to junior featherweight in the coming year. It's a close call, but the feeling is that Austin will vacate the belt before the mandatory gets enforced.

Austin was at his best against Vargas

Mike Tyson-David Tua

Why We'd Like To See It: It's always a good fight when you have in the ring two big punchers who couldn't back up if they were being pepper-sprayed. Tyson isn't what he used to be, but he can still punch like hell. Tua is about what he's always been, more or less, and he hits as hard as Tyson does. Both are short, thick, and entirely without necks. This is the immovable object against, well, the immovable object.

Who Would Win And Why: Maybe Tyson wins this 10 or 12 years ago, when he was still hungry and relatively youthful.

PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

Can Tyson stand up against an attack like this?

That Tyson might have been psychotic enough to stand in Tua's face for 10 or 12 rounds and wail away. Today? Not a chance. The first three or four rounds would make it worth the pay-per-view bill, but then Tyson would start tiring and wondering what the heck he's putting himself through all this for when he could be at a strip bar down the street. Soon enough he'd unravel, and it's a short trip home from there. Tua by mid-rounds kayo or disqualification.

Chances Of It Happening: Say it with us: Not a chance. Zero. None. Nada. As we went to press, Team Tyson reportedly was putting the finishing touches on a fight with Cliff Etienne, who showed himself just mediocre enough drawing with Frans Botha in July to land the big payday against Tyson. That's about as much risk as Tyson will take before considering an entirely unnecessary rematch with heavyweight champion Lewis.

Roy Jones-John Ruiz

Why We'd Like To See It: This is a fascinating fight because of the myriad questions it begs. Namely: Is Jones' immense advantage in talent and skill enough to overcome Ruiz' significa size advantage? Is Jones really an a time great, which we presume a victo over Ruiz would assure? How will Jon react to being in with a much larg more powerful man, and how will he if he gets wobbled? Can he hit ha enough to hurt Ruiz? And would a vict ry finally quiet all the Jones haters?

Who Would Win And Why: Jone leaves more talent in the business end a Kleenex than Ruiz will see on the be day of his life. The weight difference big, but not big enough. A lot of leg endary light heavyweights lost to go heavyweights. It won't happen here, pa tially because Ruiz isn't all that goo Jones is too fast and too smart and, ye too strong, and if he takes the fight will be because he knows he can win Jones by comfortable but ugly decisio or—you read it here—late kayo.

Chances Of It Happening: Wh knows when it comes to Jones? As w went to press he had just supposedly signed a real contract, eve after Ruiz shocked everyone—Jones most of all, no doubt—h

Jones bowls over mandatory challenger Clinton Woods

agreeing to all of Jones' demands, including one that denies Ruiz a financial guarantee. But who knows for sure whether Jones will go through with the Ruiz fight or choose instead to face mandatory light heavyweight challenger Antonio Tarver. We're hoping it's the former.

Vernon Forrest-Kostya Tszyu

Why We'd Like To See It: Before he whipped Shane Mosley the first time, Vernon Forrest kept telling everyone that his well-documented amateur win over Mosley was no fluke—he had Mosley's number, and that win in the amateurs proved it. Well, Tszyu, long underrated and now the top dog in one of the game's toughest divisions, has a significant amateur win over Forrest. Was that a fluke? Or, like Forrest's victory over Mosley, would it translate to the pro game? Could the heavy-handed Tszyu, though a junior welterweight, out-muscle Forrest as he does many of his opponents, or would the weight difference be too much? It's a fascinating matchup.

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Versatile Tszyu takes Ben Tackie to school

Who Would Win And Why: It doesn't always work out (see Mike Tyson-Henry Tillman) but results achieved in the amateurs often are good indicators of how a fight will go in the pros. If Tszyu had failed as a pro to reach the same level of success he did as an amateur, you could say he stood no chance because Forrest is a solid welterweight and in fact will fight very soon at 154. But Tszyu has excelled in the pro ranks—to a greater degree even than Forrest has, incidentally—and styles mean everything. It says here Tszyu boxes and brawls enough to win a close but clear decision.

Chances Of It Happening: Here's the rub: Tszyu has said often that he's perfectly comfortable at 140 and has no plans to move up. Forrest, on the other hand, already has his sights set on junior middleweight; junior welter is in the opposite direction. If that's not enough, Forrest just signed a multi-fight deal with HBO; Tszyu is a Showtime fighter. Enough said.

After beating Jacqui Frazier-Lyde, Ali's biggest fight is Martin

Christy Martin-Laila Ali

Why We'd Like To See It: Simple: Martin and Ali are two of the best female fighters in the world. If they're not quite the very best, they're at least the best known, in addition to being among the best. So what more could you ask for? You could ask that they be closer in weight than they are—Martin is a small welter, Ali a solid middleweight—but maybe the difference evens things out a little, offsets Martin's considerably longer resume.

Who Would Win And Why: Martin is a little on the downside now. We don't know if she's ever looked as beatable as she has over the last year or so. She's a little slower than she used to be, a little less willing to work hard every minute of a round. She's especially vulnerable against movers. That said, she's still too seasoned and too

experienced for Ali, who, though gifted, still punches a little like a girl. Her movement might give Martin trouble early, but by the end it's a replay of Ali-Frazier—the first one. A bloodied, swollen Martin by unanimous decision.

Chances Of It Happening: Hey, stranger things have happened. After Martin is done turning Mia St. John into an Ernest Borgnine look-alike, her plate will be pretty empty. It's apparent that she and Lucia Rijker aren't getting together, so why not Ali, who has said she wants to make her name in the sport then get out quick?

Miguel Barrera-Roberto Leyva III

Why We'd Like To See It: The question is, why wouldn't we? The first time these two got together, it ended in a technical draw. The second time, which came last-August, they beat one another around the ring like they owed each other money. Two of Leyva's teeth had to be rescued from the canvas in the last round. It was one of the best and most savage strawweight slugfests we've ever seen.

Who Would Win And Why: There's no way Leyva can stand up again under the kind of attack Barrera laid on him last time on the way to winning the decision. He's not fast enough to keep Barrera on the outside and he's not strong enough to back him up. The only way he can fight him is on the inside, because that's where Barrera wants the fight to be. And Barrera owns him there. It's good for as long as it lasts, but this time it doesn't go the distance: Barrera KO 8.

Chances Of It Happening: What the heck else is going on at strawweight? While you couldn't blame the fighters—especially Leyva—for not wanting to do it again, it's a natural. Their second fight was just a half-step below Ward-Gatti I, and we know Ward and Gatti did it again. These two will, too.

Antwun Echols-Byron Mitchell

Why We'd Like To See It: You can't beat a fight between a pair of sluggers with soft chins. Echols and Mitchell fit the bill. Everyone knows by now what kind of puncher Echols is, and if you don't know about his chin, watch a tape of his war with Charles Brewer; he dropped like a stone every time Brewer touched him. Mitchell isn't quite as explosive as Echols is, but if he catches you he can take you out. His chin? The well-worn Julio Cesar Green nearly starched him in the first round of Mitchell's last outing. And Bruno Girard hurt him. Yes—Bruno Girard.

Who Would Win And Why: Mitchell's biggest problem in the ring is complacency; he's perfectly willing to let you outbox him so long as you're gentle about it. He's also a terribly slow starter, which means Echols would jump on him in the first round. The sense here is that Mitchell would survive the initial onslaught, get Echols into trouble at some point, and then collapse from an overhand right somewhere around the fifth or sixth round. Overall, a fun ride.

Chances Of It Happening: Don King has spent a lot of time making sure Mitchell remains the WBA titlist, and he's not going to blow it now by letting them force a monster like Echols on him. And

Leyva and Barrera whack away in their second fight

Would Echols overwhelm Mitchell like he did Richard Grant?

they won't, even though Echols is currently ranked number two. If it's not in King's best interest for Echols to move any higher, history tells us he won't. Mitchell will face his mandatory, some Frenchman named Mehdi Sahnoune, and then if he takes any optionals, they'll be faded guys like Green or unknowns like Sahnoune. Unless Echols signs with King, he's not fighting Mitchell.

Mohammad Abdullaev-Ricardo Williams

Why We'd Like To See It: Forget about the close win Abdullaev scored over Williams in the Olympic games. That's almost secondary. The real attraction here is the style matchup. Williams is quick-fisted and mobile, Abdullaev is all pressure and force. Williams is flashy; Abdullaev is resolute. Both are excellent, high-profile prospects who haven't been coddled. This is a can't-miss fight.

Who Would Win And Why: There is every reason to believe that what happened at the Olympic games would happen in the pros. Also, Williams is unquestionably talented, but there's still a hint of amateur in him, which you would expect at this point in his development. Abdullaev suffers no such malady. To watch him, you would think he's a 30-fight pro. Abdullaev by unanimous decision with a couple of knockdowns thrown in for good measure.

Chances Of It Happening: This fight can and probably will happen provided neither guy moves up in weight, but there's no way it happens in 2003. Williams' brain trust won't take the chance. Maybe in a couple of years when there's significant money to be made, but not now. ■

PHOTO BY TOM HOGAN

Abdullaev takes a right from Williams in the Olympic final

The RING PREDICTS ...

The Status Of The Ring Championships In 2003

Before peeking into the future, a brief recap of what has occurred since THE RING launched its new championship policy in the April 2002 issue is in order.

Originally, only four fighters qualified to be recognized by THE RING as legitimate world champions—Lennox Lewis (heavyweight), Roy Jones (light heavyweight), Bernard Hopkins (middleweight), and Kostya Tszyu (junior welterweight). Since then, five more world champions have been crowned—Oscar De La Hoya (junior middleweight), Vernon Forrest (welterweight), Floyd Mayweather (lightweight), Marco Antonio Barrera (featherweight), and Paulie Ayala (junior featherweight)—bringing the total to nine.

That's a lot of progress in less than 12 months, but the fight to return integrity to championship boxing is far from over. Oddly enough, filling the vacancies has not been the toughest part of the battle. Weaning the sport away from the alphabet organizations has proven much tougher. These organizations are so entrenched, many people, even those who understand the terrible damage the Alphabet Boys have wrought, cling to them like junkies, afraid to face the world without a dose of poison running through their veins.

As in any war, allies are needed in order to emerge victorious, and THE RING has been very fortunate to have a number of influential people on our side. Foremost have been the studio hosts for ESPN2's *Friday Night Fights*, Brian Kenny and Max Kellerman, who have played a major role in publicizing and promoting our efforts. Recently, there was also a breakthrough when Bob Papa, *FNF's* blow-by-blow man, mentioned THE RING's rating as an alternative to the corrupt alphabet rankings.

We've also received significant support from print and Internet media, including Dan Rafael (*USA Today*), Royce Feour (*Las Vegas Review-Journal*), Michael Rosenthal (Los Angeles *Daily News*), Trac Thompson (Fort Worth *Star-Telegram*), and Doug Fischer, Steve Kim, and Ed Mulholland (maxboxing.com).

Among promoters, Bob Arum has been the most helpful, informing the media that he thought that THE RING'S championship policy was an "excellent idea." Arum has also allowed us to present RING championship belts at press conferences following bouts he's promoted.

As tremendously helpful as all of the above has been, it's vital that we garner additional support in the coming year. One of our major goals is to have HBO acknowledge that THE RING is providing the sport with an honest alternative to the alphabet organizations. It seems like a no-brainer. For several years now, HBO's broadcast team has declined to mention the alphabet groups, and both Jim Lampley and Larry Merchant have informed members of our editorial staff that they approve of what we are doing and intend to talk

PHOTO BY FRANK VITUCCI

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Lennox Lewis (left) and Kostya Tszyu pose with their RING belts

bout it during a telecast. But so far, hey have not.

Ironically, HBO interviewed THE RING Editor-in-Chief Nigel Collins for a iece on the alphabet organizations that vas shown as part of the Marco Antonio Barrera-Johnny Tapia telecast, but failed o mention THE RING's championship olicy. HBO also posted some erroneous graphics concerning who the publication ecognizes as legitimate world champi-ns. Hopefully, HBO will rethink its mbiguous and somewhat confusing tance in the coming months.

Another goal for 2003 concerns our good friends at ESPN2. While we ouldn't ask for better backing than we get from the *FNF* studio hosts, it seems ontradictory that the advertising, on-air graphics, and ringside broadcast team epeatedly refer to the alphabet ratings nd titleholders. While this might seem a it hypocritical considering THE RING eems to do the same, our intention is ot to market a fight or fighter to the masses, but to accurately report what oday is, unfortunately, still part of the ews of boxing. Hopefully, in short order every fight fan will be re-educated nd we can drop all reference to those groups.

Having ESPN uniformly use THE RING's ratings and championships through-ut the program—even if they feel com-elled to mention the Alphabet titles—would go a long way toward reaching that goal.

The task of winning the hearts and minds of both the fans and boxing industry is an ongoing procedure. While part of this effort falls into the category of public rela-ions, it is also an educational process. Many younger fans and virtually all of the active fighters grew up after the alphabet organizations sank their claws into boxing. Simply stated: They don't know any bet-er. Therefore, another important part of our campaign in '03 will be to school the uninformed, hopefully awakening in them a new sense of history, as well as an under-standing of what THE RING hopes to accomplish.

Admittedly, there are those—fighters, promoters, managers—who are more con-

PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

The only middleweight belt that really counts is draped across Bernard Hopkins' shoulder

cerned with financial gain than honest ratings and legitimate world champions. Fortunately, THE RING's championship policy also has a lot to offer those focused strictly on the bottom line.

The WBC charged a fee of approximately $240,000 to sanction the Oscar De La Hoya-Fernando Vargas fight. That money came out of the fighters' purses. THE RING, which announced well in advance that it would recognize the winner as the true 154-pound champion, didn't charge a dime.

Think of how much more money the fighters would have taken home if they would have shunned the WBC strap, and instead settled for THE RING belt that De La Hoya was awarded at the postfight press conference. Promoters will also benefit financially, as they have to foot the bill for transporting, housing, and feeding alphabet officials. THE RING, on the other hand, pays its own way.

Don't be surprised if more and more fighters and promoters realize the economic advantages and decide they don't need the alphabet groups anymore. Marco Antonio Barrera pioneered that movement in June '02 when he refused the WBC belt and accepted THE RING featherweight title after decisioning Erik Morales. Look for others, sick of forking over substantial sums for basically nothing, to follow suit in '03.

There should also be further progress in filling the championship vacancies. The first is likely to come in the rubber match between junior flyweights Rosendo Alvarez and Bebis Mendoza. Now that Ricardo Lopez has retired, Alvarez is rated first among 108-pounders, with Mendoza number three. A bout between them would satisfy THE RING'S vacancy-filling requirements, and as we went to press, Alvarez and Mendoza are scheduled to fight on January 11.

You never know what's going to happen, but additional opportunities to fill vacancies will most likely occur in the super middleweight, junior lightweight, and bantamweight classes during the coming months. All it would take is a good performance here, a bad showing there, and the right matchmaking. And if that sounds a bit ambiguous, just think of where we stood this time last year, back when the championship picture was totally muddled.

Right now, the alphabet organizations are on the defensive, especially in court *(see page 62)*. They are also being subjected to intense scrutiny from boxing-conscious lawmakers such as Senators John McCain and Byron L. Dorgan, who are trying to get new federal legislation passed that would greatly curtail much of the alphabet chicanery. But regardless of what happens in the courts and in the Congress of the United States, the crusade that began with the April '02 issue will endure.

THE RING strongly believes that the winds of reform are beginning to blow through the Sweet Science, and that in 2003 they could very well reach hurricane force. ■

The RING PREDICTS ...

Special Experts' Poll:

Who Will Be The Fighter Of The Year In 2003?

JOE TESSITORE (ESPN blow-by-blow announcer): "If Roy Jones finally takes on legit and interesting challenges like John Ruiz and Antonio Tarver, he will show concern for his ring legacy and wow us. The table is set for him to do something really special, but he has to want it. If not, watch out for Shane Mosley to bounce back and grab three wins at 154, including a rematch against Oscar De La Hoya. I really do believe Shane is the hungriest guy out there willing to take chances. Shane just doesn't match up well with Vernon Forrest, but the future will be different for him."

JIM LAMPLEY (HBO blow-by-blow announcer): "It would be the winner of Lennox Lewis-Wladimir Klitschko, but I think that fight will happen in 2004. So I think the Fighter of the Year in 2003 will be Oscar De La Hoya, because he'll get a chance to avenge both of his losses and fight Felix Trinidad and Shane Mosley. I think there is a very good chance Felix will come out of his retirement and face Oscar. The fighter I saw against Fernando Vargas would have an excellent chance of winning rematches against Trinidad and Mosley. If there were to be a Roy Jones-Bernard Hopkins fight, then obviously the winner of that fight would be the Fighter of the Year in 2003, but I don't see that happening. Roy can still gain consideration to be Fighter of the Year by facing a competitive heavyweight, like Chris Byrd. I don't view John Ruiz as a legitimate top heavyweight, and a Ruiz-Jones fight would be more like a sideshow."

MIKE ROSENTHAL (*Los Angeles Daily News* boxing writer): "The only guy who I can think of is Oscar De La Hoya. To pick someone as Fighter of the Year is predicated on a fighter getting the fights he wants. There a good chance Oscar could face Trinidad and Mosley again. H beat Trinidad once, though not officially. Though I think Mosle is a good fight, Oscar's getting Shane at a time where his confi dence isn't where it once was. Oscar has a chance to get bo fights and win both fights. I can't imagine anyone else out ther who could have as many big fights like Oscar. If Lewis decides t fight Wladimir Klitschko, and Klitschko wins, there's a decen chance it could be Klitschko."

MAX KELLERMAN (ESPN2 *Friday Night Fights* studio ana lyst): "I'm going to say Chris Byrd. He's going to face and be Evander Holyfield in 2002, and then he'll fight another heavy weight around his size, someone like John Ruiz. When Byrd fight someone his own size, he wins. If Roy Jones beats Ruiz, th

Coming off his win over Vargas, De La Hoya is the most popular choice

would be huge. Oscar has a ton of options, but who's to say he wins them all? There are a lot of different possibilities, but based on how the top fighters are positioned, Chris Byrd has a great chance to become Fighter of the Year for 2003."

DEAN JUIPE (*Las Vegas Sun* boxing writer): "I would lean toward De La Hoya, because I think he'll face Mosley again and beat him. Oscar has the better fights out there. He can stay at 154 and wait for Vernon Forrest, or move up to 160 and meet Bernard Hopkins. I feel Oscar can beat both of them, though I have my doubts about Oscar meeting Forrest. But let's say Oscar moves up to 160 late next year, and meets Hopkins then. Oscar can beat Hopkins, because Hopkins is doing nothing but getting older."

PHOTO BY HERBY WHYNE/SPORTZFRAME

Forrest's two victories over Mosley have him in prime position for 2003

GENARO HERNANDEZ (color analyst for Telefutura and Spanish-language HBO): "There are no other choices but Oscar. Even though I don't think Felix Trinidad is going to come back, and Shane Mosley lost twice, Oscar has more big-fight options, and I would really like to see Oscar against Vernon Forrest. That would be a real good match. Vernon is a very smart fighter, and that would be a toss-up fight. But based on experience and being a little heavier than Vernon, I'd give the slight edge to Oscar."

BOBBY CZYZ (*Showtime Championship Boxing* ringside analyst): "There are some great opportunities to a number of fighters. Vernon Forrest and Floyd Mayweather are two fighters who come to mind. I'd have to give the nod to Vernon Forrest. Forrest has so many options that could come. He's proven to be consistent as hell and he's a tough fight for anyone. He could come up to junior middle, and there are serious possibilities. De La Hoya hasn't sidestepped much, and if he faced Vernon, Vernon Forrest would be able to beat Oscar. He's too much of a sharpshooter and he has a little more speed. Plus, I think he's tougher than Oscar, and toughness is huge at that level."

CALVIN WATKINS (*Dallas Morning News* boxing writer): "My guy is Vernon Forrest. He's a premier fighter at 147, and if he fights at 154, he's still a marquee guy. If Oscar beats Shane Mosley, Vernon will face the winner, and I think he can beat De La Hoya. The other option Vernon has is to fight Kostya Tszyu. Vernon is like Bernard Hopkins was two years ago. Vernon has some smart people around him who will make him a marketable guy. Tszyu is also in a good position, waiting for Floyd Mayweather to come up. He's another guy worth considering."

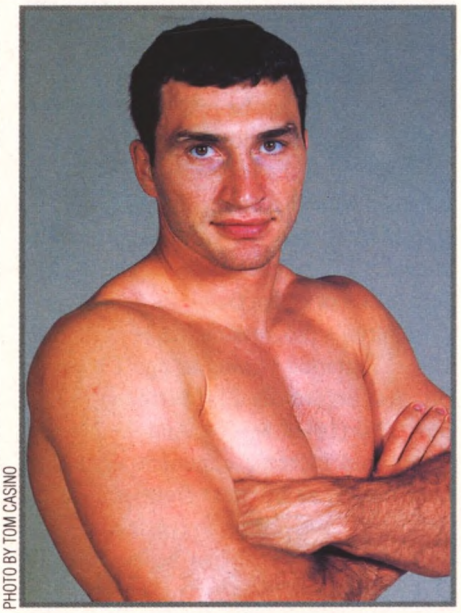


PHOTO BY TOM CASINO

If Klitschko gets a shot at Lewis, will he emerge as the Fighter of the Year?

CLAUDE ABRAMS (British *Boxing News* editor): "This made me think how few stars there are in boxing. If Roy Jones were to get a fight with John Ruiz, and were to beat Ruiz, I'd say it would be Jones. But I don't know that that's going to happen. So I think Wladimir Klitschko is going to emerge as the top fighter in 2003. Lennox Lewis has achieved everything he's set out to achieve in boxing, and he'll be 38 by late-2003, when he may fight Klitschko. Klitschko is hungrier, he's as big as Lennox, he's powerful, and he's improving. A year from now, Klitschko is capable of beating Lewis. I see Klitschko as the Fighter of the Year for 2003, based on Lewis getting complacent, and Klitschko getting better."

RICH MAROTTA (FOX SportsNet *Sunday Night Fights* ringside analyst): "I believe the Fighter of the Year for 2003 will be Oscar De La Hoya. 'The Golden Boy' is super motivated to close out his career in glorious fashion and cement his legacy. That's what he's fighting for now. His wife wants him to get out of boxing, but it's his legacy that's keeping him going. He has Floyd Mayweather in his corner, and he's fighting in superb form. He'll look to avenge his loss against Shane Mosley, and close out 2003 against Felix Trinidad, or some other high-visibility opponent if Trinidad doesn't come out of retirement—possibly someone like Bernard Hopkins." ■

The RING PREDICTS ...

The Breakthrough Stars Of 2003

Nate Campbell

The undefeated "Galaxxy Warrior," a junior lightweight/featherweight from Jacksonville, Florida, has almost everything you could want in a rising contender. He has murderous one-punch power (see his single right hand kayo of Daniel Alicea), good height and reach, sound skills, a top-notch trainer in Buddy McGirt, and, boy oh boy, does he ever have a story. Campbell bounced around from foster home to foster home and from school to school (15 of them before earning his high school diploma), he worked every job from washing dishes to selling vacuum cleaners door-to-door, and he trained himself for half of his pro fights. He claims to have bitten the tail off a cat because it scratched him, and he says he wouldn't hesitate to throw pigs' feet at Naseem Hamed. What's not to like?

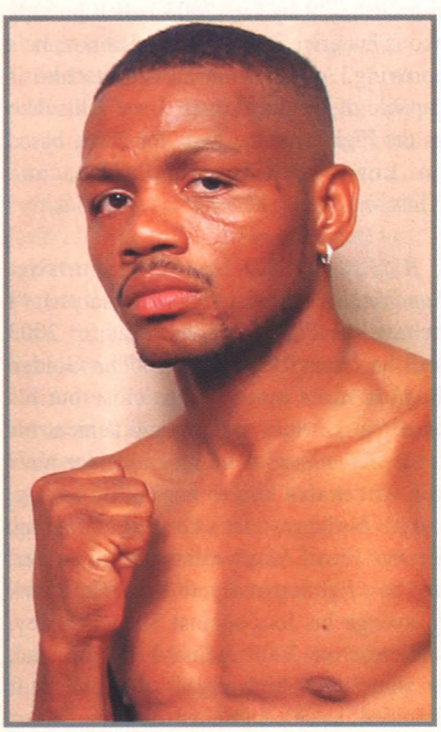


PHOTO COURTESY OF MAIN EVENTS

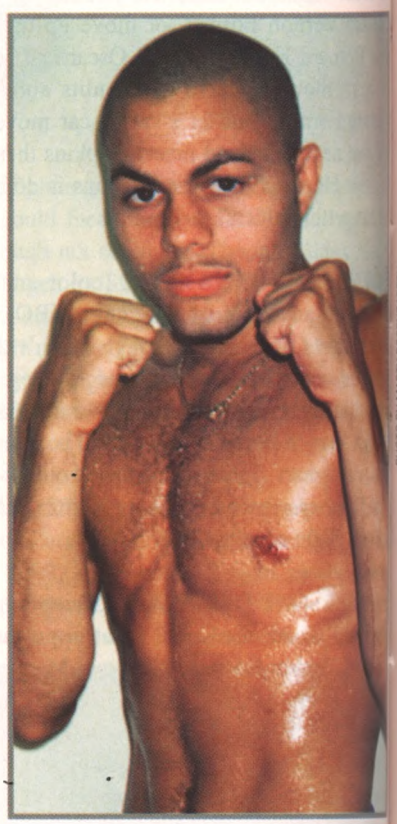
Campbell: Great story, great potential

The one drawback is that Campbell, 22-0 (20), is already 30 years old. But that's just one more reason to list him among the breakthrough stars of 2003. Campbell's promoters at Main Events know they have to keep moving him quickly, as evidenced by the fact that an HBO *Boxing After Dark* meeting with Joel Casamayor is in the works for the first quarter of the year. With his charisma and kayo power, The Galaxxy Warrior could become an out-of-this-world star.

Kermit Cintron

After establishing himself as the poster boy for *ShoBox* with three spectacular knockout wins on the Saturday afternoon Showtime program in '01 and '02, the soft-spoken but hard-hitting Cintron is looking to establish himself as one of the top welterweights in the world in '03. Manager/trainer Marshall Kauffman informed THE RING that Cintron measured up favorably when he recently stood side-by-side with 147-pound champ Vernon Forrest, and if the Reading, Pennsylvania, puncher with the Puerto Rican flag dyed into his hair has his way, he may get a chance to stand face-to-face with Forrest by late-'03 or early-'04.

Cintron's progression has been remarkable. He started boxing at age 19, turned pro just before his 21st birthday, and is now 17-0 (16) at age 23. And the progression could increase exponentially in the near future, as his next fight will be his first since an operation to repair a ruptured knuckle tendon that has been bothering Cintron since the amateurs. The plan is to take two tuneup fights, then start going after top-15 contenders and *Boxing After Dark* dates. If all goes well—and with Cintron's strength and power, it should—a bout with Forrest for what Kauffman called "the only real welterweight title" could be in the offing. Not bad for a guy who never laced up the gloves until four years ago.



Cintron: Knockout newcomer

Miguel Cotto

If there's one prospect nearly everyone in boxing is in love with, it's Cotto. The 2000 Puerto Rican Olympian is, not surprisingly, gaining especially high praise from his promoter, Bob Arum.

"What we like to do is have one major fighter every four years," said Arum. "First

Cotto: Top Rank's franchise prospect

it was Oscar De La Hoya, then Floyd Mayweather, and now Cotto. And I honestly feel that Cotto is more developed at this stage than Oscar or Floyd were at the same point in their careers."

Junior welterweight Cotto, 12-0 (9), is a remarkably fluid stalker with a dynamite left hook, much like his homeland's previous hero, Felix Trinidad. And like Trinidad, who became a beltholder at age 20, Cotto, 22, is moving very quickly. He's already beaten former title challengers Justin Juuko and John Brown (the latter wasn't pretty, but the result was a 10-round shutout), and the plan is for him to take another step up on HBO in February against former lightweight titlist Cesar Bazan. By the end of the year, Arum foresees Cotto being ready for Zab Judah or even world champion Kostya Tszyu.

As for the one little hiccup with many Hispanic fighters—the language barrier—it won't be a problem for Cotto, whose English is coming along rapidly. Cotto shows all signs of being able to walk the walk, and soon he'll be able to talk the talk.

Kelly Pavlik

Not everyone agrees that having white skin guarantees a smoother path to superstardom—Pavlik's promoter, Bob Arum, insists it's easier nowadays to promote a Hispanic fighter—but one thing we can all agree on is that packing a serious punch will help make a guy an attraction.

At just 20 years of age and without the fully polished skills of a guy like Cotto, Pavlik, 15-0 (14), is going to be brought along more deliberately in '03 than the other fighters on this list. But his exposure will increase—Top Rank will continue putting him on high-profile undercards and hopes to have him headlining ESPN shows by mid-year—and he should be one of the hottest young fighters in the game by year's end. If you've seen any of his highlight-reel knockouts, you know why. The 6'3" middleweight from Youngstown, Ohio, has a vicious left hook, a withering overhand right, and a right uppercut that can send shorter fighters into orbit. Pavlik may be nicknamed "The Ghost" because of his pigmentation, but the moniker also works because his power is downright scary.

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Pavlik: Tall order for middleweights

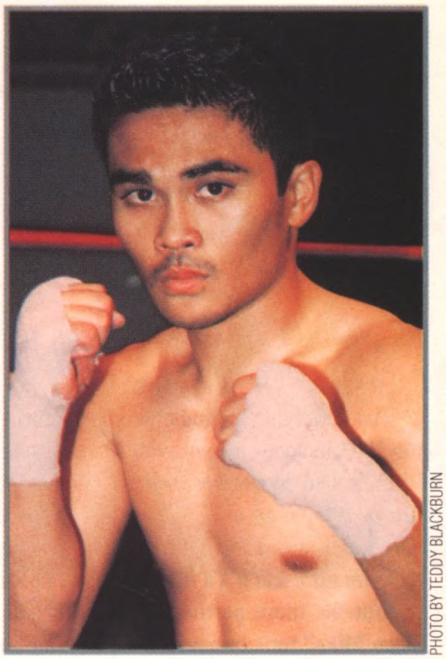


PHOTO BY TEDDY BLACKBURN

Viloria: High-flyin' Hawaiian

Brian Viloria

Flyweight Viloria was one of the last 2000 U.S. Olympians to turn pro, but when he finally did on May 15, 2001, "The Hawaiian Punch" made an immediate splash, entertaining an ESPN2 audience with an action-packed win over Benjamin Escobia. Nine fights later, Viloria, 9-0 (6) with 1 no-contest, is poised to become the first of the 2000 U.S. Olympians to fight for one of the prominent alphabet titles.

Adviser Lou DiBella says Viloria, who already has a 12-rounder under his belt, will fight two or three more times in '03 before challenging for a title sometime in the second half of the year. That's one heckuva fast track, but that's the way it often goes for flyweights—especially those with as much ability as Viloria. A powerfully built boxer-puncher, Viloria boasts a wicked body attack and has an excellent trainer in Freddie Roach. The personable 22-year-old has some defensive holes to shore up, but those holes make him that much more entertaining. And when he does have a dull fight, one quick clip of Viloria jumping rope will make audiences forgive him. It all adds up to that rarest of commodities in flyweight boxing: a fighter with the potential to attract attention and make millions. ■

The RING PREDICTS ...

10 Burning Questions For 2003

1
Is there really going to be a Lewis-Tyson rematch?

Heavyweight champ Lennox Lewis keeps telling us his itinerary for 2003 includes a fight with Mike Tyson, to the bewilderment of level-headed people everywhere. *Tyson? The same Tyson that Lewis just beat the crap out of?* Yes, that Tyson, and you can understand why Lewis wants the fight. It's still probably the biggest payday out there for him, and it's a fight he knows he should win easily.

But the more pertinent issue is whether Tyson will want it. "Iron Mike" took one hell of a pounding in their first fight, and he knows deep down inside that he'll probably get more of the same in a rematch. So Tyson would have to see an awful lot of dollar signs to make fighting Lewis again worth his while. The first time around, the fight sold nearly 2 million pay-per-views, and both fighters made approximately $30-million. But now that the world knows how much better Lewis is than Tyson, no amount of press conference profanity will convince the money-conscious members of the public to waste 55 bucks on the rematch. Let's say, perhaps generously, that the rematch could register one million PPV buys. That means about half as much take for the fighters as last time, with Lewis probably wanting better than a 50-50 split. So a $12-million payday seems a reasonable estimate for Tyson. Is that enough?

Recall the painful squeal Tyson let out in the corner during the first fight. Recall the way his face looked when it was over. Lewis can say what he wants, but Tyson won't be on his dance card in 2003.

2
Will boxing come back to network TV?

It doesn't look likely. Due in part to Fernando Vargas' endorsement deal with Miller Lite, NBC was reportedly planning to televise one or two of Vargas' comeback fights in '03, possibly turning the charismatic "El Feroz" into a mainstream star. But the steroid charges against Vargas will, in all likelihood, put the kibosh on the deal. Even if Vargas is found innocent, the allegations have already tainted his image, and we all know that the perception of boxing as a dirty sport was a big reason it fell out of favor with the networks and their advertisers in the first place. Never mind that baseball is shrouded in steroid controversy, or that college basketball has been rocked by point-shaving scandals, or that figure skating's judges have proven themselves as shady as boxing's. Those sports get a free pass, but boxing never does.

3
Will Felix Trinidad stay retired?

When "Tito" first announced his retirement, we all thought it wouldn't last. But he seems serious, and his father—whose advice Trinidad has always followed—is more than serious. The retirement was clearly not a negotiating ploy, and if he won't budge for the payday he'd get to fight Oscar De La Hoya, Tito won't budge for anybody. Face it, folks: Felix Trinidad's boxing career is over.

4
Will Oscar De La Hoya fire Floyd Mayweather Sr. by year's end?

No matter what, *Oscar* won't fire Mayweather—he'll have one of his flunkies do it if he wants it done. But the question we're asking here is whether he'll want it done. And that comes down to two factors: whether Mayweather starts demanding a bigger cut of the purses, and whether De La Hoya loses a fight and needs someone to blame. Mayweather seems content with the financial arrangement so far, and, because he loves the spotlight, he's not going to suddenly make a stink that could get him ousted from Team De La Hoya. So it boils down to whether Oscar is going to lose in the coming year. The risk is minimized by the fact that De La Hoya says he might only fight once. That fight will probably be against Shane Mosley, and it's a fight for which Oscar will be a slight favorite. So call Mayweather a slight favorite to still be training him when 2004 begins.

"You'd better watch yourself, Mayweather"

5

Will Vernon Forrest become the star HBO hopes he can become?

It's real simple: No matter how good you are, people won't care about you if you're boring. The hardcore boxing fan will watch Forrest because he's the world welterweight champion. But the occasional fan only tunes in for heavyweights, big-name stars, or consistently exciting warriors. If Shane Mosley couldn't become an A-level drawing card with his spectacular style (and a win over De La Hoya on his record), then Forrest never will.

6

Besides sure-shot George Foreman, will any other first-year eligibles make the International Boxing Hall of Fame's Class of 2003?

There are actually three other excellent candidates appearing on the ballot for the first time this year. Three-division former titleholder Mike McCallum is almost as much of a shoo-in as Foreman, but two smaller, foreign fighters with similarly sparkling credentials may find themselves on the bubble. Puerto Rican Sammy Serrano, whose two 130-pound title reigns lasted a total of six years, has a chance, as does Mexican Daniel Zaragoza, a one-time bantamweight beltholder and three-time junior feather titlist. But whether it's two, three, or four first-year eligibles getting the necessary votes, there will definitely be a more modern flavor than usual to the Hall's "Modern" category in '03.

7

Will Bernard Hopkins soften up on his negotiating tactics and make a big fight?

It depends on what you consider a big fight. Clearly, Hopkins' alphabet mandatories (a third fight with Robert Allen!) don't qualify. And the superfights aren't going to happen, as negotiations with Roy Jones have led absolutely nowhere and a fight with De La Hoya isn't in "The Golden Boy's" sights until 2004. So that leaves fights with the likes of Joe Calzaghe and Harry Simon, which may or may not qualify as "big." But the guess here is that one of them—probably the higher-profile Calzaghe—will happen because Hopkins, as unpredictable as he is, knows he's getting older and can't wait around forever.

8

Will Zab Judah bounce back to the level he was at before the Kostya Tszyu fight?

One thing Judah needs is a busy fighting schedule, which he isn't going to have until the promotional tug-of-war between Don King and Main Events concludes. Judah looked rusty and unsure of himself against Omar Weis in July '02, so he needs some confidence-building fights before he takes any overly dangerous ones. But even with his confidence back, Judah might never have what it takes to beat Tszyu; he's just too sloppy and inconsistent. Still, moved carefully, Judah can move back *toward* where he once was, and then perhaps take on the best 140-pounders in the world sometime in '04.

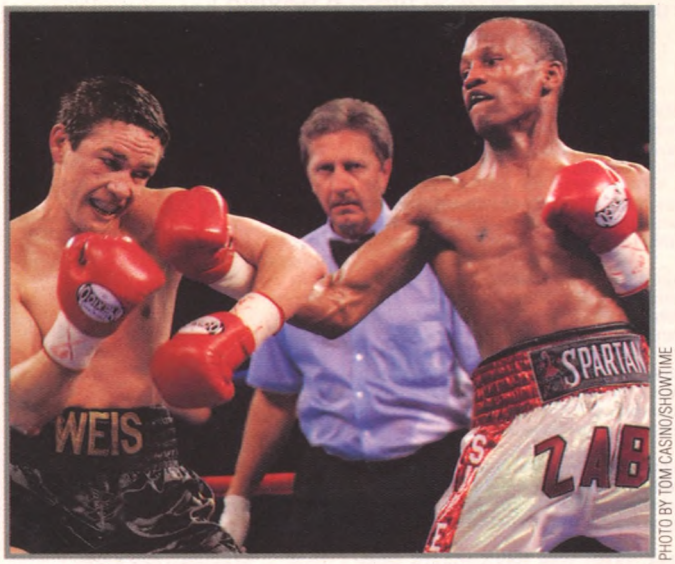


PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Can Zab be fab again?

9

Can Elena Reid become the next Christy Martin?

The latest fighter to call herself "Baby Doll" is certainly cuter than Martin, and, like Martin, she's an exciting brawler with skills. She has the potential to catch on, but she needs the right outlet, and fighting on ESPN2 undercards won't make her a star. Just like Martin became a sensation fighting on Mike Tyson pay-per-views, Reid will need to latch onto the undercards of someone like De La Hoya if the mainstream is going to take notice. Even so, she only has 14 pro fights under her belt, and she's only 21 years old. Give her time, and Reid may become the biggest star in women's boxing, but it probably won't happen in '03.

10

Which high-profile fighters will fight for the last time in 2003?

You can bet Micky Ward will say goodbye, and the "maybes" include Jesse James Leija, Vinny Paz, the disinterested Roy Jones, and Dariusz Michalczewski, who is fading fast and needs to step away soon if he hopes to retire with an undefeated record. Some have speculated that this could be Lennox Lewis' last year, but don't count on it; if Lewis couldn't walk away after the Tyson win, he's probably not going to retire until someone beats him into retirement. ■

PHOTO BY JED JACOBSOHN/GETTY IMAGES

WORLD BOXING BACK ISSUE

For more than 25 years WORLD BOXING has earned respect for its ability to cover the big fights and speculate on the fu of the sport and its stars. Back issues of WORLD BOXING are available in limited quantity. Don't delay—order today!

May 1979: Sugar Ray Leonard: Is He More Popular Than Ali? Plus: Howard Davis Jr., Gerry Cooney, Kallie Knoetze, Wilfred Benitez.

May 1980: Comeback! The Return Of Leon Spinks! Plus: Vito Antuofermo, Battling Siki, championship previews.

Nov. 1980: Larry Holmes: "I'm Going To Crucify Ali!" Plus: Matthew Saad Muhammad-Lopez, Mustafa Muhammad-Martin, Rocky Lockridge, boxing deaths.

July 1981: Eddie Mustafa Muhammad: "My Challenge To The Heavyweight Champions." Plus: Michael Dokes, Gato Gonzalez, Johnny Verderosa.

Sept. 1981: Giant Gerry Cooney: Lethal, Awesome, Ready. Plus: Eddie Mustafa Muhammad, Ray Mancini, Wilfred Benitez, Aaron Pryor.

Sept. 1982: Why Ray Leonard Must Never Fight Again, By Harold Weston Jr. Plus: Earnie Shavers, Mike McCallum, Alex Ramos, Carmen Basilio.

Jan. 1983: Thomas Hearns' Crucial Challenge Of Wilfred Benitez: Can The Hitman Slay The Dragon? Plus: Juan LaPorte, Spinks-Braxton, Ruben Munoz, Roger Mayweather.

March 1983: After The Battle Of Champions ... Aaron Pryor: A Place Among Stars; Alexis Arguello: Will His Four-Title Quest Continue? Plus: Sugar Ray Leonard, Holmes-Cobb, James Shuler, James Pipps.

July 1983: Spinks vs. Qawi: The Brawl For It All. Plus: Duran-Moore, Jerome Coffee, Verderosa-O'Grady.

Sept. 1983: Larry Holmes: Fading At 33? Plus: Michael Dokes, Greg Page, Gomez-LaPorte, Mike McCallum.

Nov. 1983: Exclusive Interview With Marvelous Marvin Hagler. Plus: Holmes-Marvis Frazier preview, Hamsho-Benitez, Spinks-Mustafa Muhammad, Tony Ayala Jr.

Dec. 1983: What I Learned And Why I'll Come Back All The Way, By Gerry Cooney. Plus: McCrory-Jones, Hagler-Duran preview, legendary heavyweights vs. today's heavyweights.

Jan. 1984: Pryor-Arguello II. Plus: Mancini-Chacon, Gerry Coetzee, Nino LaRocca, Ray Mancini.

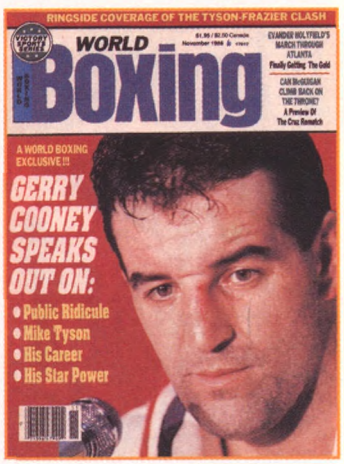
Feb. 1984: Gerrie Coetzee Looks Toward Larry Holmes: Headed For The Explosive Heavyweight Superfight. Plus: Tony Sibson, George Foreman, Aaron Pryor, Lupe Aquino, Joe Frazier.

April 1984: 1983—The Year In Review. Plus: Chandler-Muniz, Sugar Ray Leonard, Steve Cruz, Larry Holmes.

July 1984: Aaron Pryor Returns To Catch Some Rays: Leonard And Mancini Are Within The Hawk's Grasp. Plus: Witherspoon-Page, Carlos Palomino, Medal-Hargrove, Doug DeWitt.

Sept. 1984: The Comeback Of Sugar Ray Leonard. Color/Wilfredo Gomez. Plus: Michael Dokes, Milton McCrory, Donald Curry.

Nov. 1984: Aaron Pryor: A Superstar In Search Of A Showdown. Plus: Livingstone Bramble, Costello-Shields, Jake LaMotta, Tony Tucker, Marvin Hagler, Holmes-Coetzee.



Novemver 1986

Dec. 1984: John Mugabi Feasts On Animal Fletcher: The Beast Is Hungry For Big Game. Color/Ray Leonard. Plus: Roberto Duran, Hagler-Hearns.

Jan. 1985: Thomas Hearns Sends A Message To Marvin Hagler: "The Hitman Will Get You Next!" Plus: Pinklon Thomas, Harry Arroyo, David Bey, Bramble-Crawley.

Feb. 1985: Marvin Hagler Vows: "Thomas Hearns Is Doomed!" Plus: Gerry Cooney, Thomas Hearns, John Mugabi, Ray Seales, Mike McCallum.

March 1985: Blood And Guts Against The Bonecrusher: Larry Holmes—A Champion Ready To Fall? Plus: Sugar Ray Leonard, Olympians, "Upset Saturday," Juan Meza.

April 1985: Cooney vs. Page: The $10-Million Challenge! Plus: Hagler-Hearns, Year In Review.

May 1985: Who's The Baddest? Preview Of The Hagler-Hearns Superfight. Plus: Hector Camacho, Arroyo-Alli, boxing mysteries.

June 1985: Donald Curry: A Hot Fighter As Cool As Ice. Plus: Hagler-Hearns, Greg Page, Gerry Coetzee, Carl Williams.

July 1985: Sensational Hector Camacho: Poised For The Lightweight Throne. Plus: John Mugabi, Larry Holmes, superfights, Donald Curry, Gerry Cooney.

Sept. 1985: A Career In Ruins? Gerry Cooney: Time Is Running Out. Plus: Holmes-Williams, Thomas Hearns, overrated & underrated.

Oct. 1985: Pinklon Thomas: "I'm The Real Heavyweight Champion." Plus: Larry Holmes, McGuigan-Pedroza, Aaron Pryor, Billy Costello.

Nov. 1985: Can Larry Holmes Break "The Record"? Plus: Julio Cesar Chavez, Boza-Edwards, McGuigan-Taylor, Marvin Hagler.

Dec. 1985: Special Previews: Hagler vs. Mugabi, Hearns vs. Shuler. Plus: Camacho-Ramirez, Lupe Pintor, Buddy McGirt.

Jan. 1986: Curry & McCrory Clash For The Undisputed Welterweight Crown. Plus: Hector Camacho, Mark Breland, Holmes-Spinks, Wilfred Benitez.

Feb. 1986: Heavyweight King Michael Spinks: His Formula For A Successful Title Reign. Plus: Barry McGuigan, Azumah Nelson, Hector Camacho, Jimmy Paul.

March 1986: Michael Spinks' Own Story: From The Streetlight To The Spotlight. Plus: Barry McGuigan, Camacho-Rosario, Pernell Whitaker.

April 1986: Donald Curry Demolishes Milton McCrory: The Cobra's Most Marvelous Fight Is Yet To Come. Plus: Mike Tyson, Barry McGuigan, Wilfred Gomez, Michael Spinks, Year In Review.

June 1986: Electrifying!!! Mike Tyson Explodes On Network TV. Plus: Alexis Arguello, Livingstone Bramble, Curry-McCallum, Matthew Hilton.

July 1986: Hagler & Hearns Roar To The Rematch. Plus: Mike Tyson, Donny Lalonde, Donald Curry, Richie Sandoval, Azumah Nelson.

Sept. 1986: Mike Tyson Shows He's Mortal ... But He's Still Headed For Immortality. Plus: Matthew Hilton, Marvin Hagler, Vinny Pazienza, Frank Bruno, Luis Espinoza.

Oct. 1986: Hector "Macho" Camacho Retains His Title, But Loses His Nickname. Plus: Mike Tyson, Michael Olajide Jr., Gerry Cooney.

Nov. 1986: World Boxing Exclusive: Gerry Cooney Speaks Out. Plus: Tyson-Frazier, Steve Cruz, Evander Holyfield, Barry McGuigan.

Dec. 1986: Mike Tyson's Drive To The Title: Ruthless, Brutal, Unstoppable. Plus: Hagler-Leonard, Meldrick Taylor, Thomas Hearns, Tyrell Biggs.

Jan. 1987: The Formidable Mike Tyson: Primed For His Title Challenge. Plus: Michael Spinks, Vinny Pazienza, Bobby Czyz, Curry-Honeyghan, Hagler-Leonard, Berbick-Tyson.

Feb. 1987: Mark Breland: The Class Of '84. Plus: Thomas Hearns, Lloyd Honeyghan, Camacho-Rosario, Olympians.

March 1987: Year In Review. Plus: Marvin Johnson, Tyson-Berbick, Larry Holmes.

April 1987: Tyson vs. Bonecrusher: Who Will Survive Their Unification War? Plus: Hagler-Leonard, Greg Haugen, John Mugabi, Julio Cesar Chavez.

May 1987: Hagler-Leonard: Super Fight Or Super Slaughter? Plus: Mike Tyson, Chris Reid, The Dynamite Dozen.

June 1987: Shining Stars: Pazienza, Holyfield, Curry. Plus: Hagler-Leonard, Bobby Czyz.

July 1987: After The Bonecrusher Bore: Mike Tyson's Task—Rekindle The Excitement. Plus: Thomas Hearns, George Foreman, Tyrell Biggs, Spinks-Cooney.

Aug. 1987: The Return Of The Sugar Man: After Conquering Hagler, Now Aiming For Hearns? Plus: Boxing lists, Spinks-Cooney, Mike McCallum.

Sept. 1987: Mike Olajide Goes To "The Silk" Shows He's More Than Style. Plus: Evander Holyfield, Thomas, Mike McCallum, dream fights.

Oct. 1987: Erasing The Doubts—Pazienza Proves He's A Phenom, Phony. Plus: Mike Tyson, Williams-Spinks-Cooney, George Foreman.

Nov. 1987: Down And Out In Las Donald Curry's Crushing Fall. Duarte-Davila, Thomas Hearns, Taylor.

Dec. 1987: Tyson vs. Biggs: The Ali Of The '80s? Plus: Evander Miguel Lora, Shawn O'Sullivan, hitters.

June 1989: Ranking Today's Fighters. Plus: Taylor-Meekins, Honeyghan, Leonard-Hearns, Johnny

Aug. 1989: Leonard-Hearns: Kill. Plus: Azumah Nelson, Larry Michael Nunn.

Oct. 1989: Power! What Gives A Its Cruch? Plus: Ray Robinson, Benn, Virgil Hill, Nunn-Barkley, Griffith.

Dec. 1989: On The Money! Mike Kayos Carl Williams. Plus: Sizzlers color insert, Julian Anthony Hembrick, Camacho-Pazienz

Feb. 1990: Leonard-Duran: An Of The Grudge Match. Plus: Duran color insert, Whitaker-Nelson Tyson, Marlin Starling.

April 1990: Year-End Special: A By-Division Analysis. Plus: Year-end insert, Michael Spinks, the heavy legends reunite, Al Certo.

June 1990: George Foreman—The Is Falling At His Feet. Plus: heavyweights color insert, Holyfield, Tyrell Biggs, Richie Sandova

Oct. 1990: The Real Deal: Why Douglas Will Whip Evander Holy Plus: Rocky Graziano, Whitaker-Ken Norton, Terry Norris, James J.

Dec. 1990: Buster Douglas: Did He His Best In Tokyo? Plus: Mayweather, James J. Jeffries, That Was: 1978.

Feb. 1991: For The Best Of Divisions, All Roads Lead To Plus: Paez-Lopez, Glenwood Leonard-Norris preview, Jack Johnson

April 1991: Boxing's Bible Belter Inner Strength Of Evander Holy Plus: Michael Carbajal, Lopez-1990 in review, Jack Dempsey.

June 1991: Evander Holyfield's How To Get Rid Of 260 Pounds Of Five Minutes. Plus: Boxing's best, Taylor, Hearns-Hill preview, Schmeling.

Aug. 1991: Tyson The Terrible: Mike Is Boxing's Baddest Man Again. Roberto Duran, Lindell Holmes, Julio Chavez, Primo Carnera, Muhammad Ali

Oct. 1991: 12 Angry Men—The Fighters In Boxing. Plus: Mercer-Morrison, Orlando Cantz meanest fighters, Year That Was: 19

1991: Will A Few More Of These Off Mike Tyson? Plus: Ezzard ...s, George Foreman, Holyfield-Tyson, ...Patterson, John David Jackson.

1992: Can Boxing Survive Without Tyson? Plus: Julian Jackson, ...Lopez, Rocky Marciano, The Year ...Was: 1972.

1992: Evander Holyfield: With Every ...He Loses Respect. Plus: Ingemar ...sson, Rock Newman, year-end ...w, Dempsey-Firpo.

1992: Boxing's Thrill-A-Minute ...mpion: How Much Time Is Left For ...rick Taylor? Plus: Muhammad Ali, ...ield-Bowe, Iran Barkley, Kelcie Banks, ...Hinton.

1992: Holmes Challenges Holyfield: ...Old Man Has A Chance If ... Plus: ...Barkley, Eddie Cook, The Year That ...1952, George Foreman.

1992: Michael Moorer Explodes! The ...yweight With A Short Fuse. Plus: ...Czyz, Norris-Taylor, Riddick Bowe, ...Year That Was: 1961.

1992: Mike Tyson: He Could Get ... Plus: Tony Tucker, Eddie Hopson, ...ock-Lewis preview.

1993: Chavez Tortures Camacho: ...He Become Greater Than Sugar Ray ...nson? Plus: Michael Nunn, Tim Littles, ...ers, Foreman-Morrison preview.

1993: Riddick Bowe & Lennox ...s Lead The Heavyweight ...rgence. Plus: Bowe-Holyfield round ...emal Hinton, Dave Tiberi.

1993: The Old Man And The Fee: At ...illion Per, George Foreman Will ...r Retire. Plus: Morrison-Williams, ...ra Hernandez, Terry Norris.

1993: Bowe, No! Can Jesse ...uson Be 1993's Buster Douglas? ...Carbajal, Azumah, Harding-McCallum, ...Griffin, next great heavyweight.

1993: Riddick Bowe's Year In ...iew: Lennox Lewis Is The Least Of ...Problems. Plus: Michael Carbajal, Ali-...man, Ricardo Lopez, Larry Hazzard.

1994: Chavez-Whitaker: Was The ...in? Plus: Chiquita Gonzalez, ...ated/underrated, Corbett-Choynski.

April 1994: Hungry At The Wrong Time: Has Riddick Bowe Become The New Buster Douglas? Plus: Michael Bentt, Buddy McGirt, Jorge Luis Gonzalez, George Dixon, Joe Gans, Joe Walcott.

Aug. 1994: Beating Bredahl Was No Oscar-Winning Peformance: Why De La Hoya Still Has A Lot To Prove. Plus: Christy Martin, overrated/underrated, Little-Nunn, Foreman-Holmes preview, Young Jack Thompson.

Oct. 1994: Michael Moorer's Image: Is It All Shadow & Light? Plus: Evander Holyfield, Egerton Marcus, John Michael Johnson, Gorilla Jones, Bowe-Donald preview.

Dec. 1994: Paz Survives Duran: "Pain Is Temporary, Pride Is Forever." Plus: Pernell Whitaker, Julio Cesar Chavez, Tony Green, Patterson-Kelley preview, George Godfrey.

Jan. 1995: Who Are Boxing's Real Warriors? Plus: Riddick Bowe, Marty Jakubowski, super middleweights, Bob Armstrong.

Feb. 1995 (84-Page Special): The Experts Debate: Pernell Whitaker—The Greatest Fighter Of His Era ... Or The Most Overrated? Plus: Greatest fighters who never won title, boxing's bad boys, pro debuts, Bruce Flowers.

April 1995: George Foreman (1974) vs. George Foreman (1995). Plus: Riddick Bowe, cheap-shot artists, catchweight fights, Young Peter Jackson.

June 1995: Foreman, Chavez, De La Hoya, & Jones—Hollywood Boxing Movies You'll Never See. Plus: Rocky Balboa, fighters we want out, Sosa-Williams.

Aug. 1995: Why Mike Tyson Won't Regain The Title. Plus: Alonzo Highsmith, overrated/underrated, Triple-Crown Showdown.

Oct. 1995 (All-Heavyweight Issue): More Hittable Than Lovable—Can Big George Survive Another Axel Breakdown? Plus: Mike Tyson, Larry Holmes, Bruce Seldon, Joe Louis.

Dec. 1995: Lewis vs. Morrison, Bowe vs. Holyfield: Who Will Survive To Fight Tyson? Plus: James Thunder, Sammy Fuentes, tattoos.

Feb. 1996: Roy Jones vs. Pernell Whitaker: World Boxing Picks The Pound-For-Pound Best. Plus: Frankie Randall, Butterbean, two-sport boxers.

April 1996: The 10 Best Fights Of 1996. Plus: Jeff Fenech, Quartey & Trinidad, fantasy boxing.

June 1996: Hey, Roy Jones, You Say You're Bored? Take These Six Steps To Tyson. Plus: Guys never in bad fights, Lenzie Morgan, Cleveland Williams.

Fall 1996: "The Hardest Punch I Ever Landed": 10 Heavyweights Recall The Destruction. Plus: Frazier-Ali I fight poster (color), James Toney, heavyweight report card, Wilfredo Vazquez, Rocky.

Winter 1996: Myth vs. Reality. In Search Of The True Tyson (color). Plus: Lonnie Bradley, George Foreman & HBO, Bowe-Golota II preview.

Spring 1997: Is Andrew Golota Too Dangerous For Boxing? Plus: Bowe-Golota II (color), Michael Moorer, top heavyweight fights of '96, fantasy boxing, short fighters.

Summer 1997: Building The Perfect Heavyweight ... One Piece At A Time (color). Plus: Nielsen-Holmes, *Heavyweight Explosion*, fantasy boxing.

Fall 1997: The Search For The Next Great Heavyweight (color). Plus: Jesse Ferguson, fantasy boxing, Foreman phenomenon.

Winter 1997: If He Never Fights Again ... How Will Mike Tyson Be Remembered? (color). Plus: Roy Jones, Bert Cooper.

Spring 1998: A Look Back At '97 ... A Look Ahead To '98. Plus: Naseem Hamed (color).

Summer 1998: Tomorrow's Superstars: Six Who Will Lead Boxing Into The Next Century (color). Plus: Julio Cesar Chavez, David Tua.

Fall 1998: Piecing Together The Perfect Heavyweight Champion. Plus: Oscar De La Hoya (color), Riddick Bowe.

Winter 1998: Why Trinidad's Gonna Kick Oscar's Golden Butt (color). Plus: Foreman-Holmes, 10 fights that changed history.

Spring 1999: Oscar De La Hoya vs. Ike Quartey: World Boxing Picks The Winner (color). Plus: Mike Tyson debate, 10 all-time greatest welterweight fights.

Summer 1999: To Hell With The Judges! Lennox Lewis Is The Champ! Plus: De La Hoya-Trinidad preview, anti-Tyson era, Terronn Millett.

Fall 1999: Danger Ahead! Is Oscar's Macho Madness Dangerous To His Health? Plus: Ali vs. today's top 10, kayo victims, heavyweight report card.

Winter 1999: Why De La Hoya Deserved The Decision Over Trinidad. Plus: Johnny Tapia, Mark Johnson, heavyweight report card, seniors.

Spring 2000: Now We Know Grant's A *Fighter!* (We Just Don't Know How Good A Fighter). Plus: Fernando Vargas, Muhammad Ali, crying game.

Summer 2000: Mosley vs. De La Hoya: Why It's Happening ... Who Will Win! Plus: Paul Spadafora, Oba Carr, suffering survivors.

Fall 2000: 10 Reasons Mike Tyson Can Beat Lennox Lewis. Plus: Arturo Gatti, Felix Trinidad, Mike Griffith.

[All-color beginning with the March 2001 issue]

March 2001: The Ultimate Boxing Ratings. Plus: Tyson-Golota, Marco Antonio Barrera, Joel Cassamayor.

July 2001: Judah vs. Tszyu: Our Forecast Of The Unification Showdown. Plus: Trinidad-Joppy preview, Dynamite Dozen, comebacks.

Nov. 2001: It's Time To Flex Your Muscles, Roy: Fight The Trinidad-Hopkins Winner Next! Plus: Laila-Jacqui, Floyd Mayweather, greatest upsets.

March 2002: Tyson At 35: "Old Too Soon, Smart Too Late" Plus: Felix Trinidad, Ricardo Lopez, Naseem Hamed, Steve Forbes, middleweight shockers.

July 2002: Jones vs. Hopkins: What Will Happen When The Trash Talk Stops. Plus: Forrest-Mosley, Arturo Gatti, Wayne McCullough, De La Hoya-Vargas preview, great junior middleweight moments.

Nov. 2002: Lennox Lewis—Is He The Best Heavyweight Since Muhammad Ali? Plus: Naseem Hamed, Kostya Tszyu, Diobelys Hurtado, Rocky Juarez, 10 fights that transcended boxing.

☐ MAY/79	☐ JUN/85	☐ SEP/87	☐ DEC/92	☐ SUM/97
☐ MAY/80	☐ JUL/85	☐ OCT/87	☐ FEB/93	☐ FAL/97
☐ NOV/80	☐ SEP/85	☐ NOV/87	☐ APR/93	☐ WIN/97
☐ JUL/81	☐ OCT/85	☐ DEC/87	☐ JUN/93	☐ SPR/98
☐ SEP/81	☐ NOV/85	☐ JUN/89	☐ AUG/93	☐ SUM/98
☐ SEP/82	☐ DEC/85	☐ AUG/89	☐ DEC/93	☐ FAL/98
☐ JAN/83	☐ JAN/86	☐ OCT/89	☐ FEB/94	☐ WIN/98
☐ MAR/83	☐ FEB/86	☐]DEC/89	☐ APR/94	☐ SPR/99
☐ JUL/83	☐ MAR/86	☐ FEB/90	☐ AUG/94	☐ SUM/99
☐ SEP/83	☐ APR/86	☐]APR/90	☐ OCT/94	☐ FAL/99
☐ NOV 83	☐ JUN/86	☐ JUN/90	☐ DEC/94	☐ WIN/99
☐ DEC 83	☐ JUL/86	☐ OCT/90	☐ JAN/95	☐ SPR/00
☐ JAN/84	☐ SEP/86	☐ DEC/90	☐ FEB/95	☐ SUM/00
☐ FEB/84	☐ OCT/86	☐ FEB/91	☐ APR/95	☐ FAL/00
☐ APR/84	☐ NOV/86	☐ APR/91	☐ JUN/95	☐ MAR/01
☐ JUL/84	☐ DEC/86	☐ JUN/91	☐ AUG/95	☐ JUL/01
☐ SEP/84	☐ JAN/87	☐ AUG/91	☐ OCT/95	☐ NOV/01
☐ NOV/84	☐ FEB/87	☐ OCT/91	☐ DEC/95	☐ MAR/02
☐ DEC/84	☐ MAR/87	☐ DEC/91	☐ FEB/96	☐ JUL/02
☐ JAN/85	☐ APR/87	☐ FEB/92	☐ APR/96	☐ NOV/02
☐ FEB/85	☐ MAY/87	☐ APR/92	☐ JUN/96	
☐ MAR/85	☐ JUN/87	☐ JUN/92	☐ FAL/96	
☐ APR/85	☐ JUL/87	☐ AUG/92	☐ WIN/96	
☐ MAY/85	☐ AUG/87	☐ OCT/92	☐ SPR/97	

...se of a sellout, indicate substitute choice:_____

WORLD BOXING

ONLY $5 EACH

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE AND MAIL TO:
LONDON PUBLISHING CO.
BOX 910
FT. WASHINGTON, PA 19034

Please send me the back issues I've checked. I enclose $____ (U.S. FUNDS ONLY) as payment in full. PRINT YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS CLEARLY

Name _____

Address _____ Apt._____

City_____

State _____ Zip_____

For all orders except the U.S., you must add $1.50 for every back issue to be sent via boat mail, or $3 for every back issue to be sent via airmail. Int'l money order in U.S. funds only.
Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery

5979/09-02

MAKING THE BEST OF A MESI SITUATION

Finally, An Athlete Buffalo Can Be Proud Of!

Mesi took a small step up in class when he stopped former contender David Izon in October. More than anything else, the fight showcased Mesi's ability to attract large crowds. Almost 16,000 fans turned out in Buffalo to watch the local hero run his unbeaten streak to 24 straight.

PHOTO BY LARRY STUART-HAGENEY

By Tim Graham

Buffalo officially became a major-league sports town in 1970. That's when the Buffalo Bills joined the National Football League and the Buffalo Sabres were founded as a National Hockey League club. The city has long boasted four Division I basketball programs and has become a preferred site for the NCAA hoops tournament. But it has been several decades since Buffalo fans have seen anything like this. Undefeated heavyweight Joe Mesi has become such a phenomenon in Western New York, he might as well be considered a sports franchise of his own.

In April 2002, Mesi sold out the University at Buffalo's Alumni Arena, drawing nearly 10,000 fans to watch him beat Keith McKnight, a club pug local fans couldn't have picked out of a lineup of sanitation workers. Six months later, Mesi attracted 15,940 fans to the vast HSBC Arena to see him stop faded fringe contender David Izon.

Mesi-Izon drew a Buffalo boxing record crowd, easily surpassing the old mark of 14,500 set in Livingstone Bramble's 1984 triumph over then-WBA lightweight titlist Ray "Boom Boom" Mancini in Memorial Auditorium.

Name the last non-title fight that drew more than 16,000 people in the U.S. Hardly any other boxing event, championship or otherwise, topped Mesi-Izon in 2002. Not Oscar De La Hoya and Fernando Vargas (11,425). Not Vernon Forrest and Shane Mosley (15,775). Not even Lennox Lewis and Mike Tyson (15,327).

Making the Mesi phenomenon all the more insane is the fact that his hometown fans don't seem to care whom he is fighting. Sizable attendance figures generally are created when folks have interest in both combatants. But in Mesi's case, he could fight Tom Thumb and Western New Yorkers would still show up in droves.

Mesi must be a legendary boxer in the making, right?

He is 24-0 (22) and had an impressive amateur background. But, while he is an energetic fighter who isn't afraid to throw a punch or take one, he is 29 years old and has yet to face a ranked opponent. He's not particularly fast, he's not especially big, and he's pretty easy to hit.

"I don't know that Joe Mesi is a heavyweight contender, meaning a top-10 guy. Is he a top 20ish, 30ish contender right now? Yeah, he's probably in the 20s or 30s," ESPN boxing analyst Max Kellerman told ABC's Buffalo affiliate,

PHOTO BY PAT ORR

Known mainly as a puncher, Mesi boxed a bit more against Izon than he normally does, employing lateral movement and frequently beating his opponent to the punch with stiff left jabs. Whether or not "Baby Joe" will be able to do likewise with more agile foes remains to be seen.

WKBW-TV, in an hour-long Mesi special (not many fighters get that sort of publicity) that aired before the Izon fight. "Mesi's never going to be heavyweight champion. And you know something? I hope I'm wrong. Prove me wrong. It would be great to have someone like that as heavyweight champ, because he comes into a fight in shape and fights hard all the time. But, realistically, it's not going to happen."

So how does it come to be that a fringe contender can generate such a massive following?

A number of reasons, including genetics, geography, dedication, and strategic marketing, have turned Mesi into a regional sensation.

First of all, Mesi was blessed at birth. He was born into an Italian-American family with a boxing background (his grandfather, uncle, and older brother were Golden Gloves champions) and the proper big-boy genes to become a heavyweight.

"This wouldn't be the same story in the light welterweight division," said Mesi's former promoter, Allan C. Tremblay of Ontario-based Orion Sports Management. "You've got an Italian, white heavyweight in an Italian community. And the fact he has done well in the ring so far and that he has been properly matched to showcase him, he has become the white knight."

Almost as importantly as that, Mesi was born in the suburbs of a city that has been virtually devoid of big-time boxing since the 1930s. Buffalo once was a great fight town, producing six world champions by the time FDR was elected President: lightweights Frank Erne (1899-1902), Jimmy Goodrich (1925), and Rocky Kansas (1925-'26); light heavyweights Jimmy Slattery (1927, 1930) and George Nichols (1932); and featherweight Tommy Paul (1932-'33).

Fistic excellence was sporadic at best in the decades thereafter. Joey Giambra was an exciting middleweight in the 1950s, but he never won a title. More recently, cruiserweight Brian Laspada and junior middleweight Ross Thompson attained lofty rankings and even fought for alphabet titles without cashing in.

Laspada and Thompson received their title shots since Mesi has been in the local spotlight. But, sadly, neither Laspada nor Thompson has garnered a smidgen of the attention that has been heaped on Mesi. That mostly has to do with the fact that Laspada and Thompson chose to leave Buffalo and settle in Las Vegas.

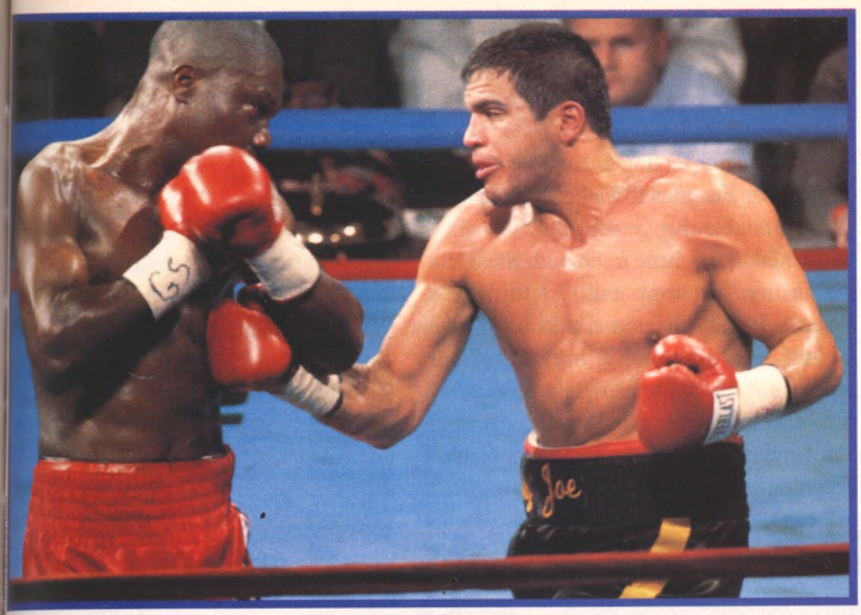
Meanwhile, the charismatic and articulate Mesi has laid down a community-oriented foundation in his hometown. He has been active in several local charities and recently launched an organ donation awareness foundation. He hosts telethons, cuts ribbons, and shakes hands. He carried the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympic torch through downtown. He appears in advertisements to help the financially troubled Sabres stay in Buffalo.

"There has been a lot of work done in the trenches by the Mesi family, and I have seen it first-hand," Tremblay said. "The one thing that the Mesis have done, [father and co-manager] Jack Mesi in particular, is from the get-go they have visited every hospital, supported every cause, and helped every charity. They did the groundwork years ago with Joe once they decided to go forward in this business.

"My instincts tell me that they almost have a sports franchise in him right now. They manufactured a franchise there with all the groundwork they've done."

PHOTO BY PAT ORR

PHOTO BY LARA STUART-BERNEY



Despite his unbeaten record, crowd-pleasing style, and agreeable personality, some local observers think that Mesi's popularity in the Buffalo area has a lot to do with the city's current lack of a championship-caliber sports team. Whatever the reason, Mesi was voted as Buffalo's most popular sports star in a radio poll this past spring.

Mesi's stature has grown so large in Buffalo that he was named the city's top sports star in a radio poll last spring.

"Joe Mesi's timing was good," said sports talk host Mike Schopp of WGR-AM. Schopp asked his listeners to name the quintessential Buffalo athlete, and he was somewhat surprised to hear Mesi's name offered so frequently. The Bills were coming off a 3-13 season, and the Sabres were dealing with the loss of goaltending legend Dominik Hasek.

"Buffalo had lost many of its football and hockey heroes, and Joe Mesi filled a void," Schopp said. "Buffalo likes to, in any way possible, attach itself to something that feels big-time. If you throw around the phrase 'world heavyweight champion,' even if it's in a simple context as it is with boxing's promotional style, people here are maybe more vulnerable to that hype than they would be in another place."

In other words, the Mesi phenomenon probably wouldn't happen in a hardcore fight town like Philadelphia, Detroit, or Los Angeles, where rabid boxing fans would be far less appeasing. A Mesi fight crowd isn't overrun by fedora-wearing, cigar-gnawing fight aficionados. There are many women and children in attendance,

(Continued on page 60)

The crowd goes wild as referee James Santa rescues Izon just nine seconds into the ninth round. The 29-year-old Mesi said he wants to fight for the world title in about a year-and-a-half.

THE ONLY BOXING EQUIPMENT TOUGHER THAN ITS NAME

TUF-WEAR®
WWW.TUFWEAR.COM
EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH
TITLE BOXING
1-800-999-1213
Call for your *free* TITLE Boxing Catalog that includes the entire Tuf-Wear Line

"BOXING TECHNIQUES AND MOVES RARELY TAUGHT THAT WILL IMPROVE YOUR FIGHTING".

THE HOOKS OF ROBINSON, MARCIANO, FRAZIER AND HAGLER • HIDDEN ABILITIES OF WILLY PEP AND ALI • L/R HOOKS FROM "IMPOSSIBLE" ANGLES AND DISTANCES • RIPPING L. UPPERCUTS • UNCOMMON RIGHTS/JABS • FEINTS • SIDE-STEPPING • CIRCLING RIGHT • RETREAT-COUNTER • TOE-TO-TOE ROLL PUNCHING • DIVERSE (UNEXPECTED) SWITCH-HITTING FOOTWORK • COMBINATIONS IN MOTION (FAST RHYTHM, ALL DIRECTIONS) • BOUNCE-PUNCHING OFF THE ROPES • SURVIVAL AND CRAFTY MOVES (INCLUDING SOLUTIONS TO 100 YEAR OLD TRICKS) ARE TAUGHT BY "JESSE" RODRIGUEZ. 5 MAJOR TECHNIQUES WILL HELP YOU CREATE MORE PUNCHING ANGLES AND NEW STRATEGIES. FOR 3 VHS VIDEOS (14 HOURS) SEND $65.00 M.O. ($99.00 FOREIGN) PAYABLE TO:
JESUS RODRIGUEZ 5701-D BELLAIRE #93, HOUSTON, TEXAS 77081 USA

No other trainer in the world can show you even a fifth of the things shown on my series, guaranteed. J.R.

www.boxingimprovement.20m.com

MOVING?

Kindly give us 8 weeks advance notice

Are you moving? If so, please give us 8 weeks advance notice so we can continue to service your subscription promptly. Check the magazine(s) below to which you subscribe:

☐ BOXING 2003
☐ WORLD BOXING
☐ KO
☐ THE RING

NAME

OLD ADDRESS

CITY

STATE ZIP

NEW ADDRESS

CITY

STATE ZIP

EFFECTIVE DATE

CLIP THIS FORM AND SEND TO:
LONDON PUBLISHING CO.
P.O. BOX 2029, DEPT. 9
MARION, OH 43302

5757/09-01/4c

Joe Mesi

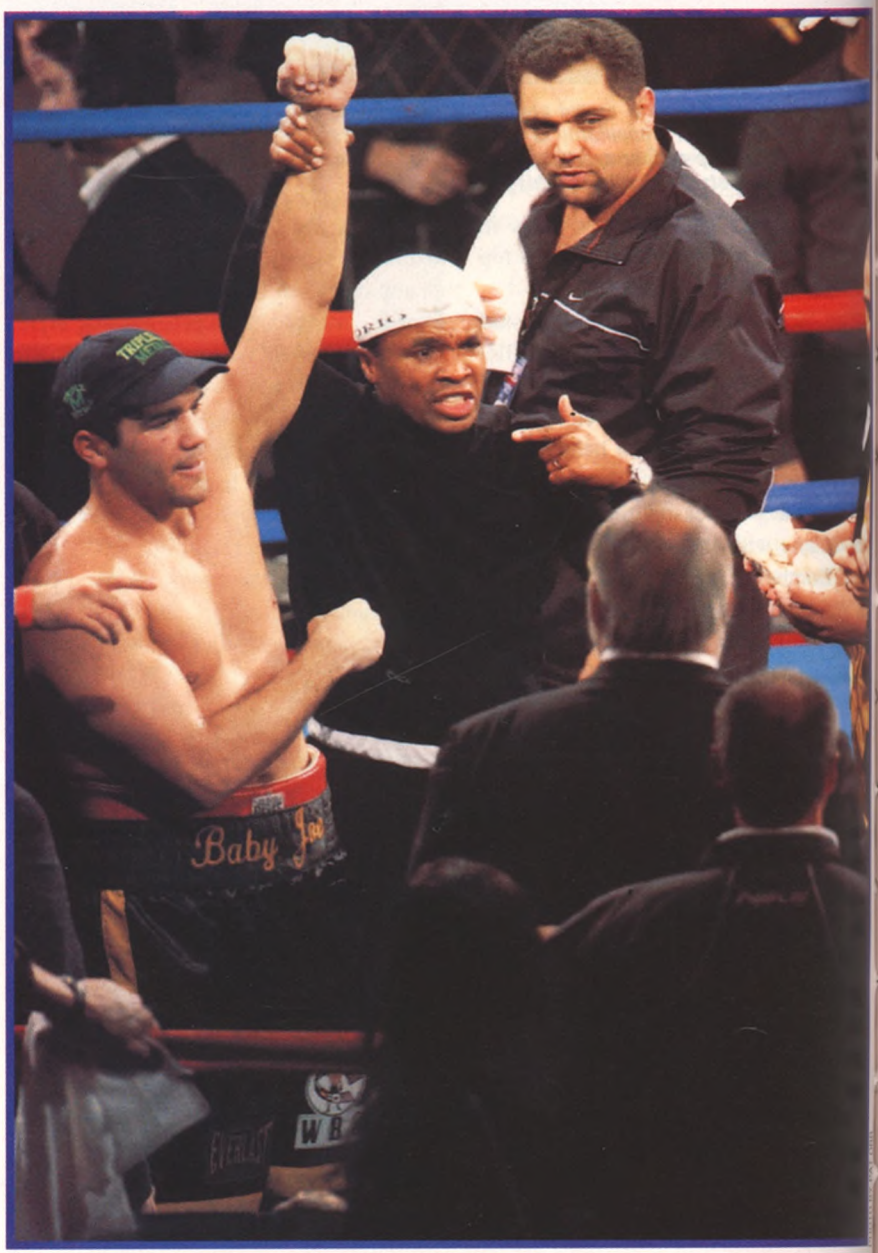
(Continued from page 59)

and the general feeling is that of a crowd cheering on the hometown boy, as opposed to an admirable ring general.

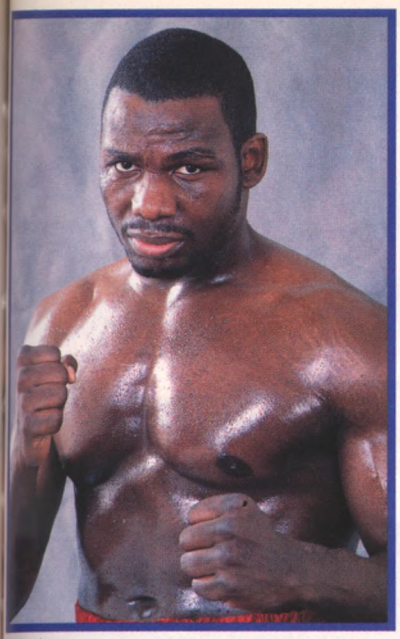
"I think it has little to do with Mesi and his ability," Schopp said. "I think it's because Buffalo has been portrayed as a second-class sports city, because of our misfortune in Super Bowls and Stanley Cup finals. If it were Joe Mesi or Joe Shmoe, the idea of being champion is what becomes the biggest draw."

Right about the time Schopp conducted his poll, Mesi's profile was boosted substantially when he signed a promotional deal with Sugar Ray Leonard Boxing. The combination of Leonard's persona and his steady stream of ESPN2 *Friday Night Fights* dates gave Mesi added credibility.

It's no coincidence that Mesi's first bout under contract with SRL Boxing (against McKnight) sold out after his previous two bouts in the Buffalo area, with Orion Sports as the promoter (against much more familiar foes Jorge Luis Gonzalez and Bert Cooper), struggled at the box office.



Mesi's promoter, Ray Leonard, seems more excited about the Izon victory than Mesi does. But when you consider the fact that the two largest crowds of Leonard's promotional career were created by Mesi, Sugar Ray's enthusiasm is easy to understand.



Former heavyweight champion Hasim Rahman has expressed an interest in fighting Mesi. Such a bout would be a gigantic step up for the Buffalo favorite, but it might come with an HBO payday.

But Mesi's ability to sell tickets has not transcended Western New York. The crowd was paltry at best in suburban Phoenix, Arizona, last June, when he stopped Talmadge Griffis in the main event of a *Friday Night Fights* card.

Some boxing insiders fear Mesi and SRL Boxing might not want to ruin a regional moneymaker by fighting too risky an opponent. If Mesi's hometown fans are packing arenas to see him score easy wins, why push the envelope?

"I'm scared that because he's white, because he fills up the place, they might bring him along too slow," said Al Mitchell, who coached the U.S. Olympic boxing team, along with Pat Burns, the year Mesi was an alternate. While the coaches were forced to send Mesi home from training camp for drinking and breaking curfew, Mitchell has remained a Mesi fan.

"He has the potential to be a top-10 guy, but I'd like to see him have a challenge. Where he's at, they'll keep him going a long while because he makes money."

Mesi has routinely debated those who are skeptical of his carefully plotted career path.

"We move slow for a reason," Mesi said after beating Izon. "I started boxing late and I wanted to wait until I matured. This is my time, and my team feels this is my time. I want to fight all the big names. I feel like now I'm ready."

Mesi probably will never be ready for the biggest name of all: Lennox Lewis. But perhaps contenders like Jameel McCline, Fres Oquendo, Cliff Etienne, and Frans Botha are within his realm.

"If Mesi can maximize his potential, he can fit in with those second-tier, lower-echelon contender types," Kellerman said.

Former undisputed champ Hasim Rahman publicly announced through his manager, Steve Nelson, that he wanted to fight Mesi in early-2003. A Rahman-Mesi match would do awesome business at the gate because Rahman has ties to nearby Rochester, New York, where he has fought several times and where Nelson is headquartered.

"We don't hide from the fact we like a Joe Mesi fight,'" Nelson said. "It's just a matter of when. It's a fight I really believe will happen. It's just a natural to put together after Rock and Joe's history in the amateurs (they split their two meetings) and all the upstate New York connections. It's just a fight that's bound to happen somehow, someway, someday."

Mesi said he wanted one more fight in between Izon and a potential Rahman date. Nelson claimed Rahman would even be happy to defend a title against Mesi, granted the former champ could wrangle a belt before then. HBO would be the likely stage.

"I've been imagining fighting for a title in a year-and-a-half from now," Mesi said. "But to talk about doing it before the end of winter, that's a little sooner than I thought. But if the opportunity is there, you can't turn it down. You have to go for it."

It's possible Joe Mesi could eventually fight for a heavyweight title. And although he has his share of detractors, no one can dispute the fact that once two heavyweights get in the ring, anything can happen. Never shall we forget Leon Spinks against Muhammad Ali, Buster Douglas against Mike Tyson, and Rahman against Lewis.

Buffalo hasn't had a champion in 70 years. Mesi probably won't end that drought, but that's not going to stop his fans from dreaming—and filling arenas. ■

Tim Graham covers boxing for the Buffalo News and is an occasional contributor to this magazine.

ALPHABET TALES

The $30-Million Typo Another Assorted Sins

By Scott Shaffer

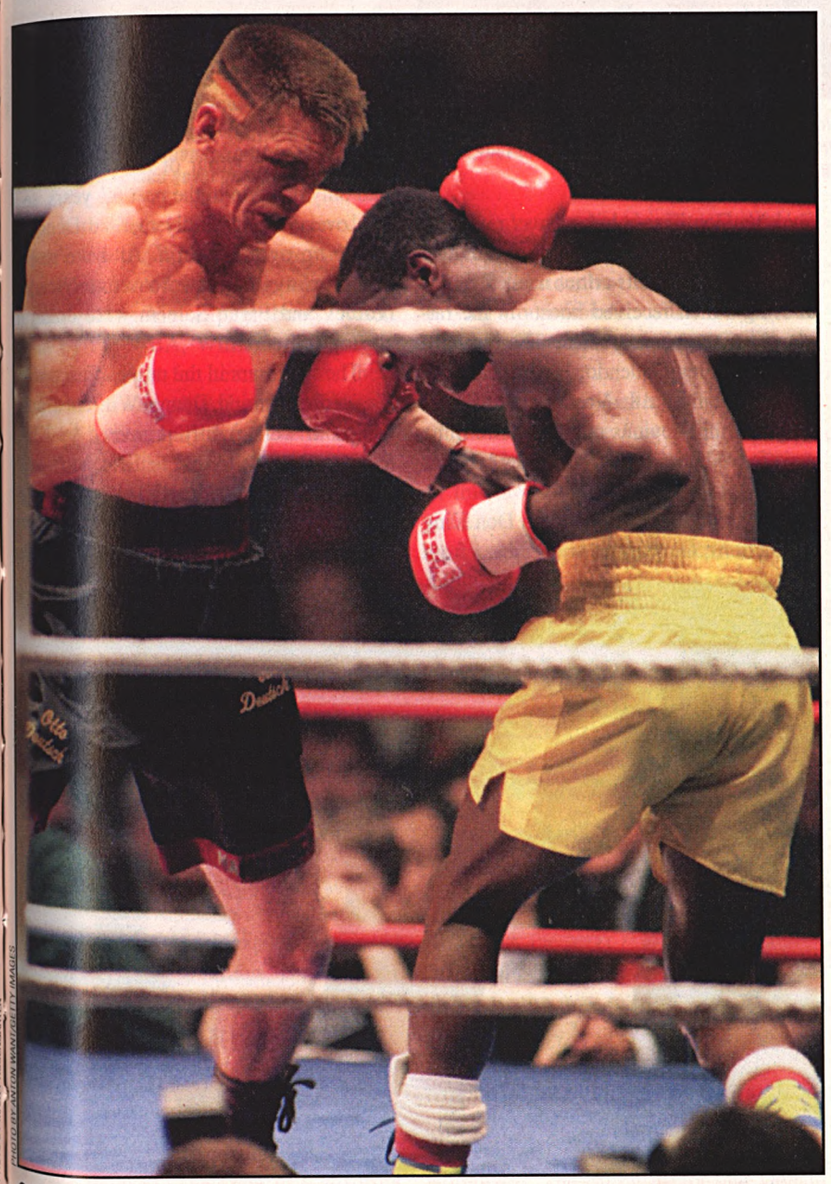
Jose Sulaiman stood up, leaned on his cane, and walked unsteadily out of the New York City courtroom. Although the cane and limp came from injuries Sulaiman claims to have suffered in the press conference brawl between Lennox Lewis and Mike Tyson earlier in the year, the image of a wounded Sulaiman may well come to symbolize the sudden vulnerability of sanctioning bodies that until recently ruled boxing with impunity.

Moments earlier, Sulaiman was forced to listen to closing arguments in which Graciano Rocchigiani's lawyer told the jury that the WBC president had stolen the WBC's version of the light heavyweight title from Rocchigiani in order to give the belt to Roy Jones. The jury sided with Rocchigiani and ruled that the WBC owes him more than $30-million.

The WBC is not the only sanctioning body to come under fire recently. A few weeks after the Rocchigiani trial, high-ranking government officials called for the WBA to be investigated for apparent violations of United States law, the Muhammad Ali Act. The threat of punitive damages and active enforcement of the Ali Act is rapidly turning into an effective one-two combination that has put sanctioning bodies such as the WBC and WBA on the defensive.

The stunning $30-million verdict was issued at a time when Jones was contemplating a history-making challenge for John Ruiz' WBA heavyweight title. The timing was ironic because it was Jones' aborted move up to heavyweight in 1998 that started the chain of events resulting in Rocchigiani's lawsuit.

Roy Jones displays the WBA and WBC belts. Both alphabet organizations have been rocked with ethical and financial problems of late that could further marginalize them.



Graciano Rocchigiani, pictured fighting Chris Eubank in 1994, won a $30-million judgment against the WBC in October 2002, that, if enforceable in the United States, could seriously damage the Mexico-based sanctioning organization.

At the time, Jones announced he was bidding adieu to the 175-pound division in order to face ex-heavyweight champ Buster Douglas. The WBC declared the light heavyweight title vacant and matched its two top contenders, Rocchigiani and Michael Nunn, to fill the void. The fight was advertised as a WBC world title fight. On March 21, 1998, in a fight viewed by millions across Europe, Rocchigiani won a decision over Nunn. He was announced as the winner and received the WBC's green championship belt from WBC supervisor Peter Stucki. Thousands in attendance heard Michael Buffer introduce the new WBC champion and applauded. The WBC went on to list Rocchigiani as its world champion for the next three months and Sulaiman even wrote several letters congratulating Rocchigiani on becoming champion.

But things changed quickly after Jones backed out of the Douglas fight and announced he wanted to continue to campaign at light heavy. The WBC soon changed Rocchigiani's listing from world to interim champion and eventually gave Jones his old title back before he stepped into a ring. Sulaiman later claimed that Rocchigiani was never the WBC's world champion and he gave sworn deposition testimony in which he explained that Rocchigiani's title was nothing more than a "typographical error."

After the WBC handed Jones the title that Rocchigiani won, an $8-million deal Rocchigiani had with a German television network evaporated, and his attempts to land a fight with Jones that could have settled the issue in the ring failed when the WBC declined to order that the fight take place. Instead, the WBC credited Jones with a mandatory defense for his cakewalk over New York City policeman Ricky Frazier.

At the trial, the jury held the WBC accountable for the damage to Rocchigiani's career. Said Rocchigiani attorney Peter Schlam, while holding up the belt presented to Rocchigiani for defeating Nunn: "There's nothing that says boxing has to be like this. Mr. Sulaiman and all those like him should be told that decent society won't stand for this type of behavior."

Rocchigiani has now returned to a German prison to finish serving his jail

PHOTO BY JAY LASH

WBC President Jose Sulaiman (left) poses with former IBF President Bob Lee, who was banned from boxing and imprisoned for corruption. Sulaiman has avoided criminal charges, but the ruling in the civil Rocchigiani case badly wounded his organization.

sentence for parole violations while his lawyers figure out how to collect the money for him. The WBC is based in Mexico, where the courts may not recognize a judgment obtained in the United States. Another of Rocchigiani's lawyers, Richard Dolan, said he was "not aware" of any insurance policy that would cover the damages.

Few believe Rocchigiani will ever collect the full $30-million, but his lawyers will be able to go to every WBC fight held in the United States and demand that the promoters hand over the sanctioning fees earmarked for Sulaiman's group. More likely, the WBC will end its nightmare by digging into its pockets and coming up with a substantial chunk of the money.

"If they don't come up with a reasonable way to resolve this, we are prepared to do whatever it takes to enforce the judgment," said Dolan.

Inactive for the rest of 1998 and all of 1999 while he chased Jones, Rocchigiani was forced to settle for a WBO title challenge against Dariusz Michaczewski in 2000. He lost that bout and has not fought since, but his attorneys did not rule out the possibility that he would come back when he is released from prison.

While the WBC tried to plot its way out of the $30-million mess it created, the problems were just beginning for the WBA as a result of the heavyweight ratings it put out in August 2002. Long accused of favoring Don King's boxers over everyone else, the WBA issued ratings that provided all the ammunition its critics needed. Three of King's men received boosts in the ratings for no apparent reason. The big winners were Fres Oquendo, Hasim Rahman, and Larry Donald. None of them had fought in the previous month, but all three were moved ahead of fighters they had lost to.

After signing a contract with Don King Productions, Oquendo was promoted from 15th to 11th to seventh without so much as a tune-up bout. He'd been inactive since April, when he suffered a knockout against David Tua. Strangely, Oquendo suddenly found himself rated two spots above the man who had just stopped him. Rahman had not won a fight in nearly a year-and-a-half, but that didn't stop the WBA from moving him five notches up the ratings, also ahead of Tua, who had stopped Rahman in 1998.

The most controversial move involved Donald, who was elevated from sixth to third. Despite a loss to Kirk Johnson and no significant wins since then, Donald suddenly was seven spots higher in the ratings than Johnson, who had beaten Donald in a July 2001 elimination bout. Donald's only fight this year was a victory over James Stanton in June. Coming into the fight, Stanton had lost four of his last five, and had only one win in the past 6½ years, so a win over Stanton hardly merited Donald a bump up over Johnson. And we're not even going to get into what Nicolay Valuev and Faruq Saleem were doing in the top 15.

The big losers in the ratings fiasco were Tua, Johnson, and Danny Williams, none of whom are currently promoted by King. The treatment afforded to British champion Williams was particularly disturbing. In 2001, Williams signed with Don King Productions. He didn't have any major

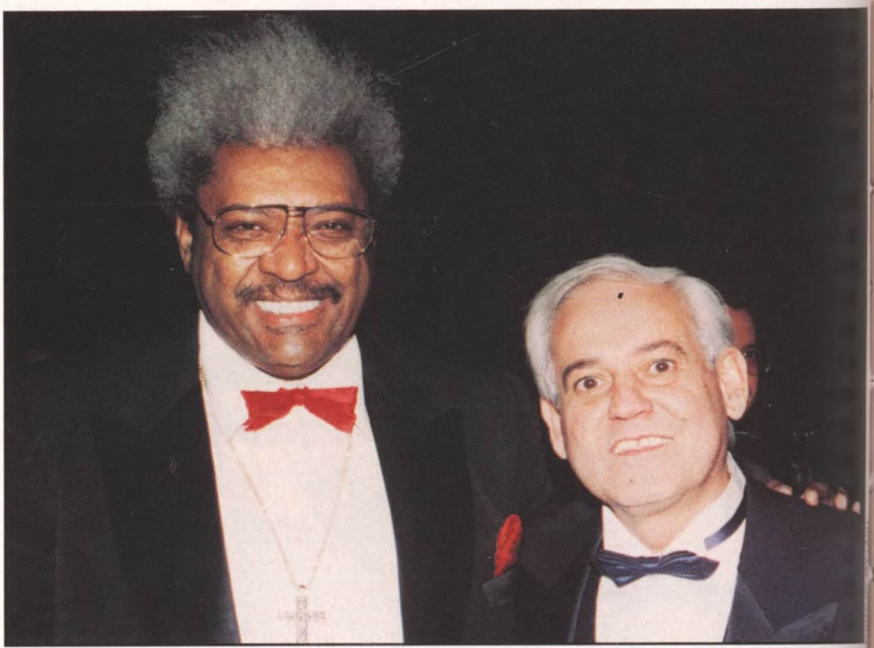


PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Don King has his photo taken with WBA President Gilberto Mendoza, whose organization has been accused of favoring King's fighters in its ratings. Like the WBC, the WBA is based outside of the United States, but earns the bulk of its money sanctioning fights in the U.S.

Apparently what happens inside the ring has little to do with the WBA ratings. David Tua (right) knocked out Fres Oquendo (left) in their April 2002 fight, but the WBA ratings released in August had Oquendo ranked seventh and Tua ranked ninth.

wins, but nonetheless he soon entered the WBA's top 10. Williams, however, soon grew disenchanted with King, who he felt wasn't getting him enough bouts. Rated ninth by the WBA, Williams left King's stable and fought for Lennox Lewis' new promotional company, Lion Promotions. Williams successfully defended the British title, but when the new WBA ratings came out, he dropped five spots to 14th.

"I hate to say this, but I wonder whether it is just a coincidence that every guy up there is a Don King fighter. It's sickening," said Dino Duva of Duva Boxing, which won a bidding war over King and others to become Johnson's promoter.

Tua and Williams didn't complain too loudly, but Johnson's management kicked up a storm that got some people in high places to sit up and take notice. Johnson had good reason to complain. Rated fifth after he lost a WBA title fight to John Ruiz in July, he was suddenly dropped to 10th with neither reason nor explanation. After learning of the new ratings, Duva filed a protest with the WBA, which by U.S. law had to be answered in seven days.

The WBA did not respond, and a firestorm of criticism ensued. Broadcaster Max Kellerman went so far as to spit (literally) on the WBA (figuratively) during an ESPN2 telecast. The state of California withheld sanctioning fees from the WBA flyweight title fight between Eric Morel and Denkaosen Kaowichit, while U.S. Senator John McCain and Tim Lueckenhoff, president of the Association of Boxing Commissions, called for the U.S. Attorney General to start investigating the WBA.

"Prosecute this matter to the full extent of the law," wrote Lueckenhoff to Attorney General John Ashcroft. "Violations of this law should not be allowed to continue."

In an attempt to short-circuit the scandal, the WBA took the unusual step of holding a public hearing, where it vacated its ratings and replaced them with a slightly more appropriate version. Blaming the ratings on an unspecified computer error, Gilberto Mendoza Jr. said with a straight face, "We are human beings. The ratings we released in August had many mistakes."

Mendoza, the organization's international coordinator and son of its president, never did explain how the computer errors slipped by the entire ratings committee.

While Mendoza's explanation was dubious, the new ratings were nearly as bad as the old. Johnson was moved up, but only two spots to eight. Donald was dropped from third to 10th, but the WBA promised Carl King, his manager, that Donald was guaranteed to fight in a title eliminator. The ruling meant that Donald was in a better position than many of the

(Continued on page 66)

Welcome to
www.BoxingShoes.com
1-800-999-1213
EVERLAST
Everlast High-Top $99.99
Everlast Low-Top $79.99
GRANT
Grant Velvet $89.99
PONY BOXING
Pony All Leather $69.99
TITLE BOXING
TITLE BOXING All Leather $49.99
asics
Asics Low-Top $49.99
$59.99 Larger Sizes
adidas
adidas Low-Top $49.99
TITLE BOXING
TITLE BOXING Lo-Top $29.99

Alphabet Tales

(Continued from page 65)

fighters who were rated ahead of him but would get bypassed for a title shot because they were locked out of the eliminator.

Although the WBC and WBA have gotten most of the attention lately, the IBF and WBO have hardly been immune from criticism.

The IBF's decision to strip Johnny Tapia of the organization's featherweight title because he decided to fight world champion Marco Antonio Barrera, instead of the IBF mandatory challenger Juan Manuel Marquez, did not endear the IBF to many boxing fans.

True, the IBF would have at least considered allowing Tapia to keep his belt if he had come up with a $20,000 nonrefundable "exception fee." But $20,000 to cover the cost of a couple of conference calls seems excessive to say the least, especially as none of the money would go to the mandatory challenger if an exception was granted. But according to Marian W. Muhammad, president of the IBF, the steep price is necessary because in cases where the exception is granted, the mandatory challenger could appeal, which would require an in-person hearing presided over by neutral parties. This, claims Muhammad, would incur expenses such as airfare and hotel rooms.

"You're not even going to ask for the exemption unless you are making a ton of money by not following the rules," said Muhammad. "If the champion chooses not to abide by the rules, he should have to pay the freight, not the organization."

But if there's a rule that says an IBF champion can ask for an exemption, how is he breaking the rules? It's all part of the Catch-22 game the alphabet organizations have been playing for years, a game where money talks louder than anything else.

The WBO is starting to hear grumbling from a trio of little-known mandatory challengers—Freeman Barr, Hussein Hussein, and Pete Frissina—who have found the WBO unwilling to enforce its own rules by ordering the respective titleholders to fight them. How these three boxers rose to mandatory status in the WBO ratings is equally baffling and only serves to further marginalize the organization's credibility.

Promoter Dino Duva speaks out on behalf of heavyweight Kirk Johnson at a New York City hearing to discuss the WBA ratings. Duva called the WBA actions "sickening."

What does the future hold in store for the Alphabet Boys? The lawsuits and investigations are sure to continue, and the tide finally seems to be turning against them. It is likely that U.S. Attorney General Ashcroft will follow the suggestions of McCain and Lueckenhoff to begin investigating the WBA.

The investigators might want to start with why the WBA allows one of its executives, Jimmy Binns, to remain in a position of conflicted interest. The WBA allows him to continue in his role while he earns money from Don King in the form of legal fees.

In what will likely be Rocchigiani's biggest legacy to the sport of boxing, he will seek to recover the punitive damages he was awarded and somehow will wind up with a huge payday. However much he eventually collects, it is clear that the size of the jury verdict will ensure that the alphabet soup groups will think twice and probably even thrice before meeting in smoke-filled rooms and stripping boxers of their hard-earned championship belts. And the Sulaimans and Mendozas of the world, once as invincible as a young Mike Tyson, will now have to look over their shoulders and worry about where the next injury may come from. ■

Scott Shaffer is a practicing attorney in New York City and a columnist for Fightnews.com.

Gilberto Mendoza Jr., son of the WBA president, blamed both "human" error and "computer" error in trying to explain the WBA ratings that prompted the California boxing commission to withhold the WBA sanctioning fee for the Eric Morel-Denkaosaen Kaowichit flyweight title bout in Anaheim.

BOXING FIGHT POSTERS, PROGRAMS, ART PRINTS, T-SHIRTS, PHOTOS & AUTOGRAPHS

GREAT MOMENTS IN BOXING

"x10" B&W Action Photos — Just $4.50 ea.

obinson/LaMotta Fight • Robinson slugs Gavilan
ouis-Schmeling Battle • Sanchez beats Gomez
empsey beats Willard • Ali floors Liston
arciano slugs Lastarza • Hagler nails Hearns
obinson beats Basilio • Leonard defeats Hearns
nney/Dempsey Battle • Frazier upsets Ali
anchez/Lopez Battle • Graziano - Zale classic
ep vs Saddler Fight • Ali-Foreman Battle
arciano's KOs Walcott • Marciano KO's Louis

"x10" B&W Photos - Just $4.50 ea.

li • Basilio • Delahoya • Chavez • Corbett • Frazier
empsey • Duran • LaMotta • Leonard • J. Johnson
Jones Jr. • Louis • Marciano • Foreman • Hagler
nson • Sullivan • Robinson • Pep • Sanchez • Holyfield

"x10" COLOR PHOTOS - $5.50 ea.

Ali • Delahoya • Hagler vs. Hearns • Chavez •
Leonard vs. Hearns • Gatti • Duran • Foreman
Frazier • Hagler • Hearns • Mosley • Holyfield
eonard • Mancini • Holyfield vs. Tyson • Vargas
Ali vs. Frazier • Ali vs. Foreman • Ali KO's Liston
arciano • Tyson • Jones Jr. • Chavez vs. Delahoya

BASEBALL CAPS - $17 EA:

ELAHOYA/CAMACHO • PAZIENZA/DURAN • DELAHOYA/KAMAU
ELAHOYA/WHITAKER • HOLYFIELD/MOORER II • TYSON/BERBICK
ENZA/ROSENBLATT • DELAHOYA/RUELAS • TYSON/HOLYFIELD
OLYFIELD/TYSON II • CHAVEZ/DELAHOYA • OSCAR DELAHOYA
ELAHOYA/CHAVEZ II • TYSON/RUDDOCK II • JONES/PAZIENZA
HAVEZ/GAMACHE • MOORER/FOREMAN • DURAN/CAMACHO • F. TRINIDAD
ONES/GONZALEZ • DELAHOYA/CARR • F. MAYWEATHER/RIOS • R. DURAN
ELAHOYA/RIVERA • IRON MIKE TYSON • DELAHOYA/TRINIDAD
ELAHOYA/MOSLEY • DELAHOYA/QUARTEY • DELAHOYA/CHARPENTIER
AYWHEATHR/HERNANDEZ • HAMED/BARRERA • DELAHOYA/GATTI

8 X 10 AUTOGRAPHED PHOTOS

UHAMMAD ALI $300.00
SCAR DELAHOYA or ROY JONES ..$80.00 ea.
OE FRAZIER or FELIX TRINIDAD ....$85.00 ea.
ARRY HOLMES or ALEXIS ARGUELLO ...$45.00 ea.
AX SCHMELING or TOMMY MORRISON ..$60.00 ea.
AKE LAMOTTA or TOMMY HEARNS ..$50.00 ea.
OHN RUIZ or ERNIE SHAVERS ....$35.00 ea.
ILLIE PEP $45.00
UGAR RAY LEONARD or ROBERTO DURAN ..$50.00 ea.
HILE GRIFFITH or DANA ROSENBLATT ...$25.00 ea.
ENNOX LEWIS or JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ ..$85.00 ea.
ILFREDO GOMEZ or CARMEN BASILIO ...$35.00 ea.
ECTOR CAMACHO or M. TAYLOR ....$35.00 ea.
ARVIN HAGLER or ARCHIE MOORE ..$75.00 ea.
AAD MUHAMMAD or DAVID TUA ....$25.00 ea.
ID GAVILAN (BW) $70.00
VANDER HOLYFIELD $100.00
IKE TYSON or BILLY CONN .....$150.00 ea.
LOYD PATTERSON or BEAU JACK ...$50.00 ea.
EN NORTON or RAY MANCINI .....$35.00 ea.
NGEL MANFREDY $35.00
INNY PAZIENZA or ARTURO GATTI ...$35.00 ea.
NDREW GOLOTA $45.00

FIGHT T-SHIRTS

ONES/GONZALEZ • HOLYFIELD/RUIZ II • HOLYFIELD/MOORER II
ELAHOYA/CHAVEZ II • DURAN/CAMACHO • OLYMPIC TRIALS '93
HAVEZ/TAYLOR • CHAVEZ/CAMACHO • O. DELAHOYA
OY JONES JR. • TYSON/HOLYFIELD '91 • DELAHOYA/TRINIDAD
ROBERTO DURAN • LEONARD/DURAN II • MIKE TYSON
FELIX TRINIDAD • HAGLER/LEONARD • HAMED/BARRERA
MAYWEATHER/HERNANDEZ • HOLYFIELD/HOLMES
ELAHOYA/KAMAU • DEALHOYA/WHITAKER • DELAHOYA/MOSLEY
YSON/LEWIS • DELAHOYA/CARR & MAYWEATHER/VARGAS
ELAHOYA/QUARTEY • PAZ/ROSENBLATT • MANCINI/CAMACHO
Vinny Pazienza • LEONARD/DURAN III • LEONARD/NORRIS
LEWIS/TUA • TRINIDAD/VARGAS • PAZIENZA/DURAN II
JULIO C. CHAVEZ • DELAHOYA/CAMACHO • SHANE MOSLEY
UHAMMAD ALI • ROCKY MARCIANO • MOSLEY/STONE
AMACHO/EDWARDS • HAGLER/HEARNS • MANCINI/HAUGEN
ECTOR CAMACHO • DELAHOYA/GATTI • MAYWHEATHER/RIOS
HAVEZ/GAMACHE • ALI/NORTON • LEONARD/HEARNS
Just $18.00 each **(choose XL or L)**

FIGHT POSTERS

ALI/BUGNER (Linen Backed) $1,000.00
ALI/FRAZIER I (LeRoy Neiman Poster) $600.00
ALI/FRAZIER I (Closed Circuit) POSTER $300.00
ALI/FRAZIER III — ON SITE $5,000.00
ALI/FRAZIER III (Closed Circuit) NEIMAN $95.00
ALI/HOLMES (REPRINT) or HOLMES/MERCER ..... $15.00 ea.
ALI/HOLMES or CHAVEZ/WHITAKER ..... $100.00 ea.
ALI/NORTON III $400.00
ALI (CLAY)/LISTON "Reproduction" $25.00
FOREMAN/ALI (Closed Circuit) Poster $500.00
BARRERA/JONES or BARRERA/DIAZ ..... $20.00 ea.
BOWE/GOLOTA or BOWE/GOLOTA II ..... $45.00 ea.
CAMACHO/ROSARIO or CHAVEZ/CAMACHO ..... $75.00 ea.
CHAVEZ/DELAHOYA or CHAVEZ/ALI ..... $5.00 ea.
CHAVEZ/RANDALL, TRINIDAD/CAMACHO $45.00
CHAVEZ/TAYLOR or CHAVEZ/TAYLOR II ..... $35.00 ea.
JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ or DELAHOYA/QUARTEY ..... $20.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/CAMACHO or DELAHOYA/RIVERA ..... $15.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/CAMPANELLA, Jones/Tate $45.00
DELAHOYA/CHAVEZ II or DELAHOYA/TRINIDAD ..... $25.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/CARR, Mayweather/Vargas $10.00
DELAHOYA/HERNANDEZ $35.00
DELAHOYA/LEIJA $50.00
DELAHOYA/MOSLEY or DELAHOYA/GATTI ..... $30.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/RUELAS or MANCINI/CAMACHO ..... $35.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/WHITAKER or DELAHOYA/GONZALEZ ..... $20.00 ea.
JACK DEMPSEY 16"X20" B&W POSTER $45.00
FENECH/NELSON II or CZYZ/LALONDE ..... $45.00 ea.
FOREMAN/COONEY or DURAN/BENITEZ ..... $25.00 ea.
FOREMAN/GRIMSLEY or FOREMAN/MORRISON ..... $40.00 ea.
FOREMAN/SAVARESE or HERNANDEZ/GERENA ..... $5.00 ea.
HAGLER/DURAN or DURAN/CAMACHO ..... $35.00 ea.
HAGLER/HEARNS or HOLMES/WITHERSPOON ..... $100.00 ea.
HAGLER/LEONARD or HAGLER/MUGABI ..... $60.00 ea.
HAMED/CABRERRA or HAMED/BARRERA ..... $45.00 ea.
HAMED/KELLY or HAMED/INGLE ..... $60.00 ea.
HAMED/SOTO or NELSON/HERNANDEZ ..... $10.00 ea.
HEARNS/BARKLEY II or LAZARRAGA/MEDINA ..... $10.00 ea.
HEARNS/HILL or HEARNS/ROLDAN ..... $20.00 ea.
HOLMES/COONEY or HOLMES/SMITH ..... $35.00 ea.
HOLMES/SHAVERS or HOLMES/M. SPINKS ..... $30.00 ea.
HOLYFIELD/BOWE or TAPIA/AYALA ..... $20.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/HICKS or HOLYFIELD/BOWE III ..... $50.00 ea.
HOLYFIELD/CZYZ or HOLYFIELD/FOREMAN ..... $35.00 ea.
HOLYFIELD/DOUGLAS or HOLYFIELD/MERCER ..... $45.00 ea.
HOLYFIELD/HOLMES or MCCULLOUGH/ZARAGOSA ..... $15.00 ea.
HOLYFIELD/MOORER I or II ..... $15.00 ea.
HOLYFIELD/STEWART $50.00
JONES/CASTRO or JONES/CHIRINO ..... $200.00 ea.
JONES/GRIFFIN II or JONES/JOHNSON or JONES/GONZALEZ ..... $30.00 ea.
JONES/HARDING or JONES/HARMON ..... $20.00 ea.
TYSON/BERBICK or JONES/TONEY ..... $150.00 ea.
LEONARD/DURAN II or WHITAKER/PAEZ ..... $40.00 ea.
LEONARD/DURAN III or LEONARD/LALONDE ..... $45.00 ea.
LEONARD/HEARNS I or II ..... $40.00 ea.
LEWIS/GOLOTA or LEWIS/TUCKER ..... $5.00 ea.
LEWIS/MCCALL or LEWIS/BRIGGS ..... $35.00 ea.
LEWIS/GRANT or LEWIS/BOTHA ..... $30.00 ea.
LEWIS/RAHMAN or MORRISON/LEWIS ..... $25.00 ea.
MARCIANO/WALCOTT (Reprint) or LEWIS/TUA ..... $25.00 ea.
MAYWHEATHER/CORRALES or MANCINI/CHACON ..... $20.00 ea.
MAYWHEATHER/C. HERNANDEZ $15.00
MORALES/MCCULLOUGH or MORALES/RAMIREZ ..... $5.00 ea
MORRISON/HIDE or SAVARESE/DOUGLAS ..... $10.00 ea.
MORRISON/MERCER or MORRISON/RUDDOCK ..... $35.00 ea.
MOSLEY/TAYLOR, MOSLEY/DIAZ or MOSLEY/STONE ..... $20.00 ea.
PAZIENZA/CAMACHO or PAZIENZA/DURAN ..... $50.00 ea.
PAZIENZA/DURAN II or PAZIENZA/ROSENBLATT ..... $20.00 ea.
PAZIENZA/JONES or PAZIENZA/BROWN ..... $45.00 ea.
TRINIDAD/WHITAKER or TRINIDAD/PETTWAY ..... $20.00 ea.
TRINIDAD/THIAM or TRINIDAD/VARGAS ..... $25.00 ea.
TRINIDAD/CHEREFI or MAYWHEATHER/CASTILLO ..... $25.00 ea.
TRIPLE HITTER - Duran/Sims, Hearns, McGuigan $30.00
TYSON/BRUNO II or TYSON/MCNEELEY ..... $15.00 ea.
TYSON/DOUGLAS $200.00
TYSON/HOLMES or TYSON/BIGGS ..... $35.00 ea.
TYSON/HOLYFIELD '91 BUD (Cancelled) $25.00
TYSON/HOLYFIELD '96 ..... $60.00
TYSON/HOLYFIELD II - 5/3/97 (Cancelled) $5.00
TYSON/HOLYFIELD II $10.00
TYSON/MATHIS or TYSON/GOLOTA ..... $35.00 ea.
TYSON/RUDDOCK II or TYSON/SAVARESE ..... $75.00 ea.
TYSON/STEWART or TYSON/FRANCIS ..... $50.00 ea.
TYSON/THOMAS or TYSON/SMITH ..... $85.00 ea.
TYSON/TUBBS or TYSON/HOLYFIELD 91 PROMO (Can.) ..... $135.00 ea.
TYSON/TUCKER or TYSON/TILLMAN ..... $45.00 ea.
*TYSON/LEWIS OR HOLYFIELD/RAHMAN ..... $25.00 EA.
MUHAMMAD ALI or IRON MIKE TYSON POSTER ..... $15.00 ea.
SUGAR RAY LEONARD S.I. or WHITAKER/JACOBS ..... $15.00 ea.
HBO POSTER featuring 11 color photos of fights $5.00

FIGHT PROGRAMS

1976 OLYMPIC PRG. (Ray Leonard) $250.00
1984 OLYMPIC BOX-OFFS (Tyson, Holyfield, etc.) $500.00
ALI/BUGNER or ALI/MATHIS ..... $400.00 ea.
ALI/BUGNER (CC) or ALI/LISTON REFEREE PROG ..... $100.00 ea.
ALI/COOPER II or ALI/LONDON ..... $350.00 ea.
ALI/FOREMAN (CC) or ALI/FRAZIER III (CC) ..... $100.00 ea.
ALI/FOREMAN (CC, Neiman) or ROBINSON/TURPIN ..... $300.00 ea.
ALI/FRAZIER (CC) or HOLYFIELD/QAWI ..... $150.00 ea.
ALI/FRAZIER II or ALI/QUARRY II ..... $500.00 ea.
ALI/HOLMES or ALI/NORTON III ..... $125.00 ea.
ALI/NORTON (warehouse find) Now just $75.00
ALI/NORTON II or ALI/YOUNG ..... $600.00 ea.
ALI/QUARRY or ALI/LONDON ..... $300.00 ea.
ALI/ROBINSON $450.00
Muhammad Ali Dinner Program $25.00
BENN/MCCLELLAN or BENITEZ/HAMSHO ..... $50.00 ea.
BOWE/GOLOTA I or II ..... $35.00 ea.
CAMACHO/HAUGEN II or CAMACHO/PAZIENZA ..... $35.00 ea.
CAMACHO/ROSARIO or LEWIS/TUA ..... $50.00 ea.
CHAVEZ/CAMACHO or MERCER/MORRISON ..... $40.00 ea.
CHAVEZ/CAMACHE or CHAVEZ/MITCHELL ..... $35.00 ea.
CHAVEZ/TAYLOR or CHAVEZ/RANDALL ..... $35.00 ea.
CHAVEZ/WHITAKER (Cover Scuffed) or CHAVEZ/KAMAU ..... $15.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/CHAVEZ II or DELAHOYA/CARR ..... $30.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/GONZALEZ or DELAHOYA/WHITAKER ..... $45.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/KAMAU or DELAHOYA/RIVERA ..... $25.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/GATTI or VARGAS/QUARTEY ..... $35.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/QUARTEY or DELAHOYA/TYSON ..... $45.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/RUELAS or DELAHOYA/COLEY ..... $35.00 ea.
DELAHOYA/TRINIDAD or DELAHOYA/MOSLEY ..... $35.00 ea.
DURAN/BARKLEY or HOLMES/COONEY ..... $75.00 ea.
DURAN/MANAFEE or NORRIS/LEONARD ..... $60.00 ea.
FOREMAN/SAVARESE or GRANT/SAVARESE ..... $25.00 ea.
LEONARD/DURAN II or McGUIGAN/PEDROZA ..... $50.00 ea.
HAGLER/HEARNS or HAGLER/ROLDAN ..... $60.00 ea.
HAGLER/MUGABI or HAGLER/OBEL ..... $45.00 ea.
HAMED/KELLY or HAMED/VAZQUEZ ..... $40.00 ea.
HAMED/BARRERA or CAMACHO/DURAN ..... $35.00 ea.
HEARNS/BARKLEY I or II ..... $35.00 ea.
HEARNS/BENITEZ or MANCINI/CAMACHO ..... $75.00 ea.
LEONARD/DURAN or HEARNS/CUEVAS ..... $125.00 ea.
HOLYFIELD/BOWE I, II or III ..... $75.00 ea.
HOLYFIELD/HOLMES or HOLYFIELD/MOORER ..... $45.00 ea.
HOLYFIELD/RUIZ II or LEWIS/MORRISON ..... $35.00 ea.
JONES/SOSA or JONES/GRIFFIN ..... $25.00 ea.
LEONARD/CAMACHO or HOLMES/MERCER ..... $25.00 ea.
LEONARD/DURAN III or HOLYFIELD/FOREMAN ..... $75.00 ea.
LEONARD/FINCH or LEONARD/LALONDE ..... $60.00 ea.
LEONARD/HEARNS I or II ..... $65.00 ea.
LEWIS/BRUNO or HOLYFIELD/BEAN ..... $45.00 ea.
LEWIS/TUCKER or LEWIS/GOLOTA ..... $30.00 ea.
LOUIS/CONN II, LOUIS/NOVA or LOUIS/MAURIELO ..... $500.00 ea.
MANCINI/CHACON or MANCINI/ESPANA ..... $25.00 ea.
MANCINI/KIM or MANCINI/VALDEZ ..... $90.00 ea.
PAZIENZA/BURGESE, JONES JR./JOHNSON $60.00
PAZIENZA/DURAN I or II ..... $25.00 ea.
PAZIENZA/JONES or PAZIENZA/GRAHAM ..... $40.00 ea.
PAZIENZA/ROSENBLATT I or II ..... $20.00 ea.
SANCHEZ/LOPEZ $375.00
TRINIDAD/WHITAKER or TRINIDAD/VARGAS ..... $35.00 ea.
TSZYU/CHAVEZ or TYSON/NORRIS ..... $35.00 ea.
TYSON/BOTHA or TYSON/FRANCIS ..... $50.00 ea.
TYSON/BRUNO or TYSON/HOLMES ..... $100.00 ea.
TYSON/HOLYFIELD I or II or HOLYFIELD/LEWIS II ..... $20.00 ea.
TYSON/MCNEELEY or TRIPLE HITTER- Duran/Sims, Hearns ..... $25.00 ea.
TYSON/RUDDOCK I or II ..... $95.00 ea.
TYSON/SAVARESE, TYSON/SMITH or TYSON/MATHIS ..... $45.00 ea.
TYSON/STEWART or TYSON/TILLMAN ..... $75.00 ea.
TYSON/SPINKS or TYSON/WILLIAMS ..... $85.00 ea.
TYSON/TUBBS or TYSON/DOUGLAS ..... $150.00 ea.
WHITAKER/NELSON $25.00

AUTOGRAPHED BOXING GLOVES
(Single Gloves, Guaranteed Authentic)

Roberto Duran or Johnny Tapia $110.00
Joe Frazier or Jake LaMotta .....$175.00 ea.
Muhammad Ali $375.00
Marvin Hagler or Kid Gavilan ...$150.00 ea.
Sugar Ray Leonard or Hector Camacho .....$125.00 ea.
Ray Mancini or Arturo Gatti .....$100.00 ea.
Shane Mosley or Naseem Hamed .....$150.00 ea.
Mike Tyson $225.00
Vinny Pazienza or Bobby Czyz .....$100.00 ea.
Larry Holmes, Tommy Morrison or Alexis Arguello .$125.00 ea.
Oscar de la Hoya or Roy Jones .....$195.00 ea.
Carmen Basilio or Vito Antuofermo .....$95.00 ea.
Archie Moore or Lennox Lewis .....$200.00 ea.
LEONARD & DURAN (By Both) $200.00
Fernando Vargas or Willie Pep ....$150.00 ea.

dering Instructions: Please include $7 post. & Hdlg. per package (Foreign Countries $15 per package ground or $23 air)
nd To: BOB PACE, Dept. RING, P.O. Box 698, Lynnfield, MA 01940 or call with AMEX, Disc., VISA or MC — (781) 284-4954

Not to be copied

CALL HIM ROCKYLITE

RICARDO LOPEZ RETIRES UNDEFEATED

PHOTO BY BRENT COOK

By Ted Bodenrader

One hundred and five pounds. In Idaho, it equals about two bushels of potatoes. In Milwaukee, it's a little more than a quarter keg of beer. In Milan, it's a runway model, and in London, it may get you a dinner for two at the Savoy. In boxing, however, 105 pounds is an extravagant piece of merchandise.

Made in Mexico, it is constructed of a bony ribcage, a pair of toothpicks for legs, and biceps the size of berries. But even in his diminutive state, there is no overlooking who Ricardo Lopez truly is. He is boxing's most perpetual star.

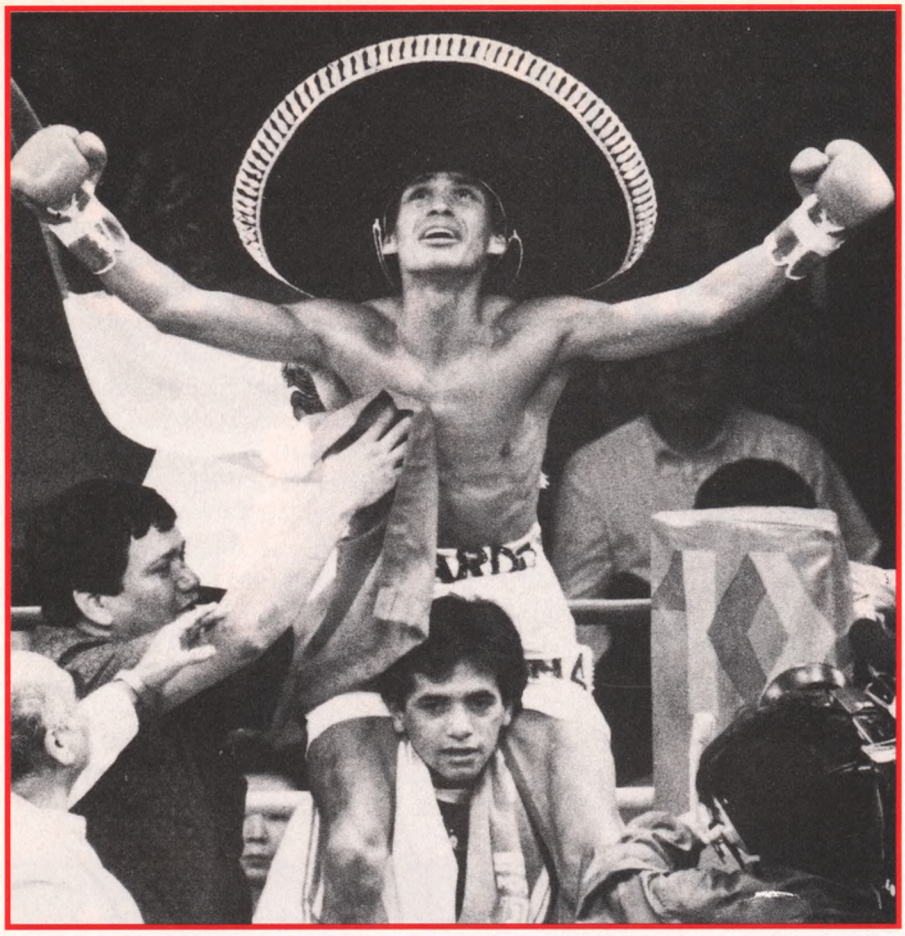
That star didn't finally burn out until October, when the man who defined the strawweight division finally did to his career what he did to every professional opponent they ever put before him. He finally laid it to rest. In doing so, Lopez departs his profession through the same path once traveled by the great Rocky Marciano, leaving behind a trail of invincibility and a stamp of greatness like few others before him.

"He has all the ingredients to be a legendary champion," said Romero Gonzales, boxing scribe for *La Opinion*, a widely circulated Spanish-language newspaper. "He has the punching power, the great speed, and the boxing ability to make him that special fighter we don't see too often. He has it all. And we must not forget his record and what that means to his fans. Oscar De La Hoya lost. Fernando Vargas lost. Even Julio Cesar Chavez lost. Ricardo Lopez never lost."

True, his accomplishments since turning pro in 1985 are undoubtedly the ingredients of a living legend: 50 victories against no defeats, with 37 of those wins coming inside the distance. A nine-year run as the WBC strawweight titleholder. A three-year run as the world's best junior flyweight. A constant resident of the sport's pound-for-pound list.

PHOTO BY CHRIS FARINA

Although he never fought any superstars, Lopez' most famous rival was Rosendo Alvarez, with whom he fought a pair of pitched battles. After being floored and held to a technical draw the first time, Lopez rebounded to pound out a bitterly contested decision in the rematch (pictured).



A sombrero-wearing Lopez celebrates winning the WBC strawweight title with a fifth-round knockout of Hideyuki Ohashi in Tokyo, Japan, in October 1990. Overall, Lopez was 6-0 (5) in Asia.

Even the one imperfection on his resume, a technical draw with Nicaraguan rival Rosendo Alvarez in '98, was avenged in Lopez' very next outing.

But even with the glossy record and reputation as one of the Sweet Science's finest craftsmen, Lopez never quite captured the fascination of boxing's stargazers. Throughout the '90s, it was always the heavyweight headliners or the charismatic charmers that lit up the sport's skyline.

Oscar De La Hoya and Roy Jones have been sizzling for close to a decade. Pernell Whitaker and Chavez blazed for years, too. Then there were shooting stars, like Terry Norris and Riddick Bowe, who burned bright, but fizzled fast. Somewhere in this constellation, Ricardo Lopez flickered modestly in the backdrop. He was an ever-present gleam, but was rarely on the end of our telescopes.

"He's been stuck in a division where very few marketable American fighters reside," explained HBO analyst Larry Merchant. "It's very hard to make a mark there when nobody is watching."

True, the strawweight division is like one of those late-night infomercials that nobody pays attention to. There was, however, an even greater hindrance that left Lopez eclipsed by the sport's bigger, more marketable stars throughout an impeccable career.

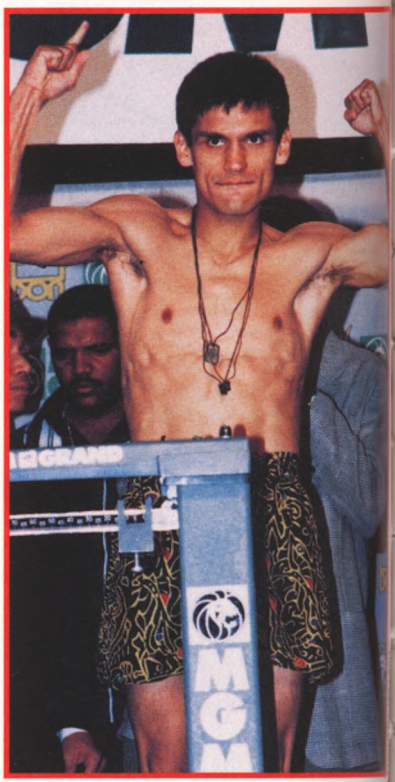
"It is unfortunate that he never fought a marquee opponent in his division or even in a neighboring division," said Merchant. "I'm not aware of the decision-making process in his camp and why he fought so rarely. And I don't know why they never sought out the more marketable fights that were out there for him. It's a mystery to me."

Ironically, Lopez first emerged as the world's premier 105-pound hellion on the night of October 25, 1990, the same day a fighter at the opposite end of the scale first staked his claim to boxing immortality. That was the date Evander Holyfield's heavyweight legacy was hatched, when "The Real Deal" first l the fuse to a legendary heavyweig career by whacking out James "Buste Douglas in three swift rounds.

On the opposite corner of the plane another reign quietly began. In farawa Tokyo, Japan, a 23-year-old Lopez wa snarling anxiously at his 105-pound counterpart across the ring. Not lon after they whisked the robe off his frail shoulders, Lopez exploded upon Hide yuki Ohashi, leveling his opponent i five chilling rounds.

In poundage, Lopez didn't measur even half of the buff and toug Holyfield, who, back in Vegas, wa basking in global glory. But that hardl mattered. Over the ensuing decade Lopez would grace the sport with th finest in fistic artistry, ringing up remarkable 21 defenses of the straw weight title, before ringing up a few more of the junior flyweight belt he col lected in 1999.

"From what I've seen since he emerged as a champion," reflected Merchant, "he's about as talented a anyone who's been out there in a long long time. I'd have to really think hard



Where's the beef? Lopez weighed 105 pounds when he won the strawweight crown in 1990. More than a decade later, he only weighed 107 in his final professional bout.

PHOTO BY JAY LASH

During his long reign as 105-pound titleholder, Lopez breezed through a succession of challengers from around the globe. In 1994, "Finito" decisioned previously undefeated Colombian Kermin Guardia (top). Filipino Ala Villamor lasted until the eighth round in '96 (center), while Puerto Rico's Nene Sanchez fell in the fifth round in '97 (bottom).

about it to come up with somebody who was better over the past 10 or 15 years, in any weight class."

Throughout that time, Lopez unloaded his abilities in a massacre of all 105-pound pugs who stood before him. Guys like Javier Varguez, Alex Sanchez, and Ratanapol Vorapin went down one by one, crippled by Lopez' vicious onslaughts and numbing power. He romped through cities like Seoul, South Korea, and Bangkok, Thailand, leaving more victims in his trail. Lopez became so feared in these Asian cities, their fans referred to his trademark weapon—a nasty left hook to the liver—as "The Monster."

But while "Finito" Lopez was tallying up the body count, other pint-sized warriors were emerging from the shadows and transcending the confines of their weight barriers. For a short time, Michael Carbajal and Humberto "Chiquita" Gonzalez transformed the 108-pound class into a fierce and fiery battleground. Their memorable trilogy in the mid-'90s soaked in hoopla of heavyweight proportions.

The smoky aftermath of these epic affairs left not one, but two marketable fights on Lopez' plate. But Lopez-Carbajal never happened. Neither did Lopez-Gonzalez. Instead, these proposed deals crumpled up like one of Lopez' knockout victims.

"He was supposed to fight Carbajal. He was supposed to fight Chiquita Gonzalez," said Merchant. "Those fights never happened for political reasons, and it deprived him of becoming a bigger draw. These fights couldn't be made because of the relationship between Lopez' management team and promoters Don King and Bob Arum. The relationships there were not good."

Hence, Lopez watched from afar as Carbajal and Gonzalez were the first performers under 110 pounds to break the $1-million barrier, as they did in their climactic rubber match. Lopez, meanwhile, would never top the $150,000 he pocketed for the first Alvarez brawl in Mexico City.

"I think he's been frustrated for a long time," said Merchant. "The few times I spoke with him, he expressed exasperation with the fact that he wasn't

PHOTO BY JAY LASH

Lopez tugs at Don King's lapel while being interviewed by Showtime's Ferdie Pacheco. King's political battles with rival Bob Arum may have prevented the fighter from obtaining marquee bouts with Michael Carbajal and Chiquita Gonzalez.

fighting more often and that he wasn't getting any of the big-money fights. Instead, he spent a good part of his career filling in vacancies on undercards."

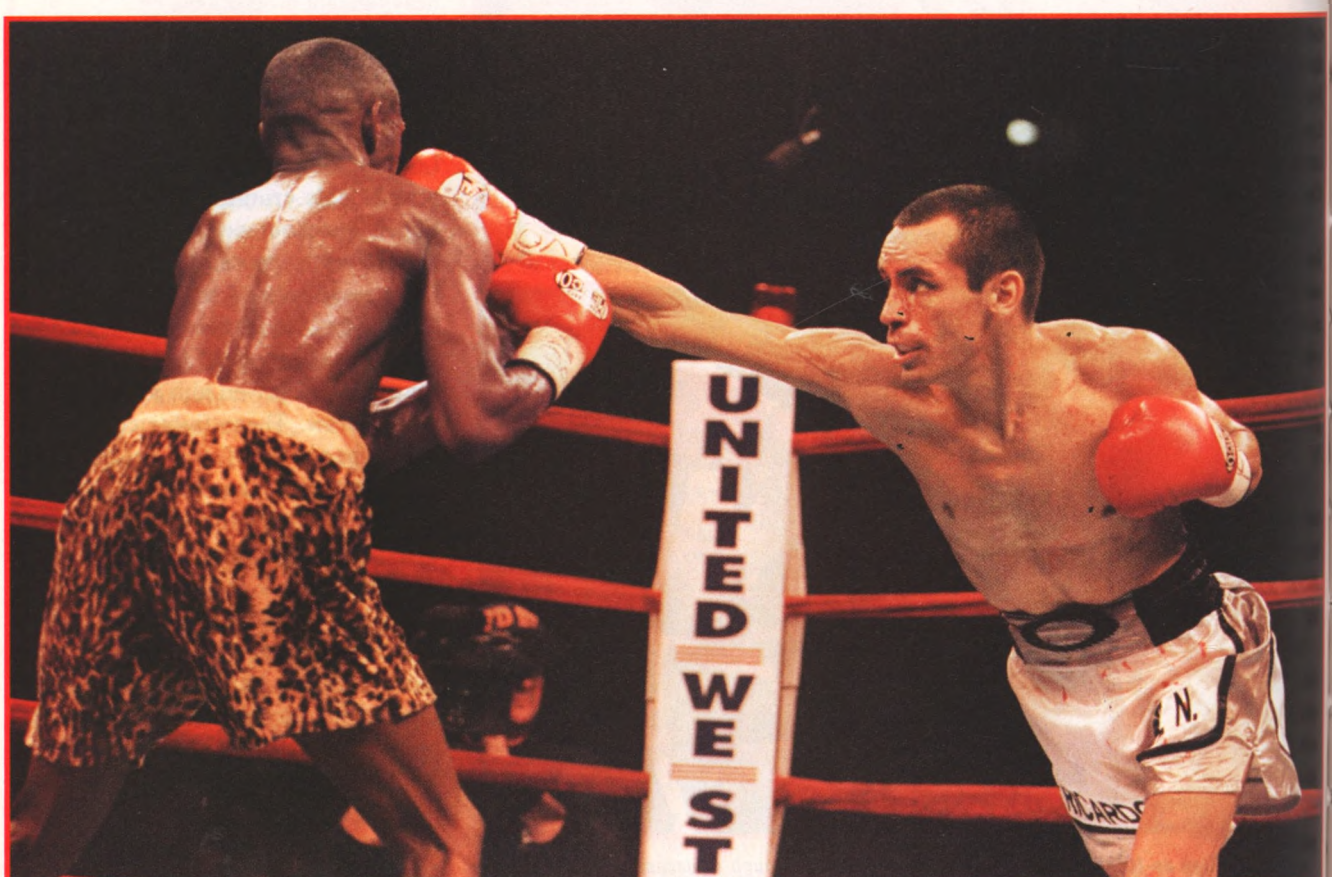
The frustration translated into a lagging activity level in recent years, a Lopez performed only three times from 1999 through 2001. He jumped up t 108 pounds in October 1999, an swiped an alphabet crown with a 12 round spanking of Will Grigsby. Immediately after, word began to surface about a possible superfight with blossoming flyweight Eric Morel.

But like his career, those negotiations sputtered, and we instead saw him making mincemeat of Zolani Petelo on the undercard of last year's Bernard Hopkins-Felix Trinidad affair in New York. Lopez never fought again.

His retirement was due to be officially announced on October 25, 12 years to the day after he set his strawweight star ablaze in Tokyo. Looking back on that night, it makes boxing buffs ponder over this Mexican's hold on history.

"I don't know if he'll ever be truly appreciated in this sport," said Merchant. "The way I feel looking back on it, just feels like there was unfinished business in his career."

If the financial business was unfin



Good to the last punch: In his final ring performance, Lopez was masterful stopping former IBF mini flyweight titleholder Zolani Petelo in the eighth round on the Bernard Hopkins-Felix Trinidad show at Madison Square Garden.

Like many of his fellow Mexicans, Lopez idolized Julio Cesar Chavez. In fact, Lopez is so popular in Mexico he has lined up numerous product endorsements that should keep the cash coming in now that he's hung up his boxing gloves.

ished in the ring, Lopez has decided to finish it elsewhere. He continues to project an image of invincibility by maintaining prime physical fitness, a perception that is important if he's going to cash in on the commercial opportunities that await him, including a recent offer from Nike. According to Gonzales, Lopez' popularity in Mexico is second only to the man he idolizes, Julio Cesar Chavez.

"He's got all kinds of commercials lined up," said Romero Gonzales. "He never made the money he should have in boxing, so he's going to make it in other ways."

But for now, middle-class life will go on for Lopez and his tight-knit family.

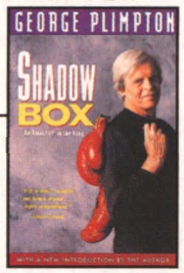
"He's very happy with retirement," said Gonzales. "He's still very healthy, his family is very happy, and he feels that he has nothing left to prove in boxing."

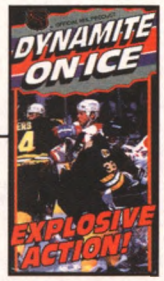
Today, as this teeny-weeny star finally fades from our scopes, we should all feel a little bit emptier somewhere deep inside. After all, boxing has just lost a very large chunk of its wanting treasure—one hundred and five pounds of it, to be exact. ■

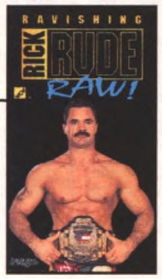
Ted Bodenrader is a freelance writer from the Boston area and a regular contributor to this magazine.

IT'S TIME TO CLEAN HOUSE!

WE'RE GETTING RID OF EVERYTHING... AND WE MEAN EVERYTHING!







BOXING BOOKS

- ☐ Dan Stuart's Fistic Carnival (Miletech) — $24.50
- ☐ Shadow Box (Plimpton) — $11.95
- ☐ Punchlines (Berger) — $21.95
- ☐ Best Of The Ring — $19.95

HOCKEY VIDEOS

- ☐ Pro Hockey Funnies — $12.95
- ☐ Dynamite On Ice — $12.95
- ☐ Devastating Hits Of Hockey — $14.95

WRESTLING VIDEOS

- ☐ Rick Rude: Raw! — $12.95
- ☐ Sting: Deadly Venom — $12.95
- ☐ Best Of Wrestling Gold (Vol. 3) — $19.95
- ☐ Best Of Wrestling Gold (Vol. 4) — $19.95
- ☐ Wrestling Funnies — $9.95
- ☐ Madusa's Workout — $9.95

BASKETBALL VIDEO

- ☐ Michael Jordan: Air Time (2-tape set w/ book) — $19.95

BASEBALL POSTERS

- ☐ Dave Justice (Braves) — $5.95
- ☐ Roger Clemens (Red Sox) — $5.95
- ☐ Mike Piazza (Dodgers) — $5.95
- ☐ Ken Griffey (Mariners)

☐ **PLEASE RUSH THE ITEMS I HAVE CHECKED!**
I am enclosing the price listed plus the appropriate postage and handling charges (see below).

POSTAGE & HANDLING CHARGES:

***POSTERS & T-SHIRTS $3**
(Canada/Foreign: $5 in U.S. funds; Airmail: $7 in U.S. funds)

***VIDEOS $4**
(Canada/Foreign: $6 in U.S. funds; Airmail: $8 in U.S. funds)

***BOOKS $5**
(Canada/Foreign: $8 in U.S. funds; Airmail: $12 in U.S. funds)

Please send to: **London Publishing Co.**
P.O. Box 910
Ft. Washington, PA 19034
Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

PLEASE INDICATE METHOD OF PAYMENT

☐ Check or money order (enclosed and payable to London Publishing Co.)

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard # _____

Expiration date: ____/____ (MO/YR) Signature: _____

PRINT YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS CLEARLY

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

5973/08-02

BACK ISSUES OF KO

Back issues of several editions of *KO Magazine,* the acknowledged leader in boxing journalism, are still available in limited quantity. Since its inception in 1980, *KO* has become known for its quality stories and columns and peak-action photographs. Don't delay. Supplies are running out!

June 1983: WBA Jr. Middleweight Champion Davey Moore: Bracing For Duran's Last Stand. Color Pinup: Donald Curry. Interview: Pinklon Thomas. Also: Duran-Cuevas, Hagler-Sibson.

Aug. 1983: Michael Spinks: King Of The Light Heavyweights ... But The Glory Can't Erase The Sadness. Color Pinup: Johnny Bumphus. Interview: Jones & Rappaport. Also: Jones-McCrory, Pryor-Arguello II preview, world's best fighter poll, Jeff Chandler, Mark Breland, Leon Spinks.

Oct. 1983: Is Larry Holmes Finished? Color Pinup: Greg Page. Interview: Marvis Frazier. Also: Marvin Hagler, Bobby Chacon, Jack Dempsey.

July 1984: Donald Curry: "I'm Better Under Pressure." Color Pinup: Gerrie Coetzee. Interview: Curry. Also: Pipino Cuevas, John Mugabi, Bill Costello, M. Spinks-Davis.

Aug. 1984: WBC Heavyweight Champion Terrible Tim Witherspoon: A Superstar Of Tomorrow? Color Pinup: Rocky Lockridge. Interview: Sugar Ray Leonard. Also: Marvin Hagler, Gomez-LaPorte.

Oct. 1984: Golden Boy Mark Breland: Can He Be The Next Sugar Ray? Color Pinup: Jaime Garza. Interview: Aaron Pryor. Also: Bramble-Mancini, Sugar Ray Leonard.

Nov. 1984: Thomas Hearns: "Hagler Is Shakin' Like A Leaf On A Tree!" Color Pinup: Tim Witherspoon. Interview: Livingstone Bramble. Also: Rosario-Davis, Marlon Starling.

Jan. 1985: The Wide-Open Heavyweight Division: Who Will Take Control? Color Pinup: Bill Costello. Interview: Tyrone Crawley. Also: Harry Arroyo, Curry-Pryor, Barry McGuigan.

Feb. 1985: Gerry Cooney: How Far Can He Go This Time? Color Pinup: Michael Spinks. Interview: Ray Mancini. Also: Dream fights, Hector Camacho.

March 1985: Next For Marvelous Marvin Hagler: The Only Fight That Really Matters. Color Pinup: Mike McCallum. Interview: Thomas Hearns. Also: Santos-Medal, Meza-Garza, Holmes-Bonecrusher.

May 1985: Thomas Hearns: *KO* Fighter Of The Year. Color Pinup: Gerry Cooney. Also: Camacho-Ramirez, Truth Williams, Year In Review.

July 1985: Aaron Pryor: Has Hawk Time Run Out? Color Pinup: Donald Curry. Interview: Greg Page. Also: Ray Mancini, James Shuler, Costello-Hatcher.

Aug. 1985: King Cobra: "Hagler-Hearns Is Done And I'm Better Than Both Of Them!" Color Pinup: John Mugabi. Interview: Bobby Czyz. Also: Larry Holmes, Roberto Duran, DeWitt-Lee.

Oct. 1985: Still Champ After All These Years: Larry Holmes—A Legend Continues To Grow. Interview: Mark Breland. Also: Michael Spinks, Milton McCrory, Wilfredo Gomez.

Nov. 1985: McGuigan! The Pluck Of The Irish. Also: Julio Cesar Chavez, Thomas-Weaver, Donald Curry, featherweights.

Dec. 1985: Pinklon Thomas: "Larry Holmes Betrayed Boxing." Color Pinup: Hagler-Mugabi. Also: Mike McCallum, Tyrell Biggs, Camacho-Ramirez.

Jan. 1986: Macho Mania! Hector Camacho Takes Aim At 10 Tough Targets. Color Pinup: Jimmy Paul. Interview: Alexis Arguello. Also: Truth Williams, Curry-McCrory.

Feb. 1986: King Michael: How Long Will He Rule The Heavyweights? Also: Barry McGuigan, Shawn O'Sullivan, Spinks-Holmes, *Rocky IV,* world's best fighter poll.

July 1986: Tyson, McGuigan, Hagler: The Stars Catch Fire And Boxing Is Hot Again! Color Pinup: Azumah Nelson. Also: Camacho-Chavez.

Oct. 1986: They're Back!!! The Cooney Circus Returns. Interview: Sugar Ray Leonard. Also: Jimmy Paul, Mike Tyson, Donald Curry.

Dec. 1986: Larry Holmes' Message To Mike Tyson: "Show Me You Can Kick My Butt!" Color pinup: Mark Breland. Interview: Holmes. Also: Witherspoon-Bruno, Evander Holyfield, Cruz-McGuigan, Danny Lopez.

Feb. 1987: Upset Of The Decade: Has Honeyghan Cut Short The Curry Era? Color Pinup: Marvin Johnson. Interview: Bobby Czyz. Also: Edwin Rosario, Hector Camacho.

May 1987: Hagler vs. Leonard—The Clash Of The Superstars: Who Will Win And Why. Color Pinup: Edwin Rosario. Interview: Greg Haugen. Also: Bobby Czyz, Tyson & Bonecrusher.

June 1987: New WBA Welterweight Champion Mark Breland: He's Got A Lot To Smile About. Interview: Marvin Hagler. Color Pinup: Greg Haugen. Also: Michael Olajide, Carlos Monzon.

Aug. 1987: Sweet Victory! Sugar Ray Humbles Hagler. Color Pinup: Leonard vs. Hagler. Interview: Evander Holyfield. Also: Spinks-Cooney preview, Donald Curry.

Oct. 1987: Greatness Beckons: When Will Mike Tyson Answer The Call? Color Pinup: Michael Olajide. Interview: Tyrell Biggs. Also: Paz-Haugen, Marvin Hagler.

Nov. 1987: Michael Spinks: The War With Tyson Is Okay With Him. Color Pinup: Vinny Pazienza. Interview: Frankie Duarte. Also: Matthew Hilton, Hagler-Czyz.

Dec. 1987: Mike Tyson: Undisputed Heavyweight King—But Is He Losing His Loyal Subjects? Color Pinup: Matthew Hilton. Interview: Barry McGuigan. Also: Aaron Pryor, Mike McCallum.

Jan. 1988: The Collapse Of A Hero: Why Breland Never Hit The Mark Of Greatness. Color Pinup: Michael Spinks. Interview: Aaron Pryor. Also: Michael Nunn, Alexis Arguello, lightweights.

Feb. 1988: Pazienza & Haugen Go For Each Other's Throats. Color Pinup: Marlon Starling. Interview: Bob Arum. Also: Tate-Olajide, ESPN Boxing.

May 1988: *KO* Exclusive—Mike Tyson, As Only Mike Tyson Knows Him. Color Pinup: Mike McCallum. Interview: Thomas Hearns. Also: Tyson-Spinks poll, Michael Dokes, Virgil Hill.

July 1988: Superfight History Dictates: Don't Expect The Expected From Tyson-Spinks. Color Pinup: Roger Mayweather. Interview: Dr. Ferdie Pacheco. Also: Roberto Duran, Azumah Nelson, Barkley-Olajide.

Aug. 1988: Tyson-Spinks: *KO's* Fearless Forecast Of Superfight '88. Color Pinup: Buddy McGirt. Interview: Matthew Hilton. Also: Lockridge-Knight, Evander Holyfield, Lloyd Honeyghan.

Sept. 1988: Tyson-Spinks, The Aftermath—What If Tyson Wins; What If Spinks Wins? Color Pinup: Frank Tate. Interview: Marlon Starling. Also: Barry McGuigan, Simon Brown, risk-taking.

Oct. 1988: Middleweight Terrorism: Iran Bombs The Hit Man. Color Pinup: Don Lalonde. Interview: Frank Bruno. Also: Roger Mayweather, Marvin Hagler.

Dec. 1988: Sugar Ray's Comeback: Why? Color Pinup: Simon Brown. Interview: Kevin Rooney. Also: Michael Nunn, best fighter poll, welterweight wars.

Jan. 1989: The Troubled Times Of Mike Tyson. Color Pinup: Lloyd Honeyghan. Interview: Gil Clancy. Also: Meldrick Taylor, Jeff Fenech, Boxing's Champs.

Feb. 1989: George Foreman Is Born Again. Color Pinup: Meldrick Taylor. Interview: Bill Cayton. Also: The Olympics, Davey Hilton, John Mugabi, Barry McGuigan.

Aug. 1989: Special 100th Issue. Color Pinup: Hagler vs. Hearns. Also: The *KO* Years, 50 most influential people, '80s ratings, best of *KO* Interview, year-by-year review, Sugar Ray Robinson.

Sept. 1989: "I Beat Up Tyson Before, I'll Do It Again," by Carl Williams. Color Pinup: Michael Nunn. Also: Chavez-Mayweather, Brian Mitchell, Marv Albert.

Nov. 1989: The Real Duran: The Stories Behind The Legend. Color Pinup: Orlando Canizales. Interview: Mike Trainer. Also: Edwin Rosario, Rosi-Van Horn.

Feb. 1990: George Foreman Risks A Multi-million-Dollar Shot At Tyson. Color Pinup: Brian Mitchell. Interview: Riddick Bowe. Also: Simon Brown, Molina-Lopez, East vs. West.

May 1990: Chavez vs. Taylor: The Best Matchup In The Last Five Years. Color Pinup: Daniel Zaragoza. Interview: Pernell Whitaker. Also: Leonard-Hearns, Glenn McCrory, Prince Charles Williams.

June 1990: A Sugar-Free Future? Thomas Hearns Is Looking Up. Color Pinup: Glenn McCrory. Interview: Michael Moorer. Also: Matthew Hilton, Molina-Suarez, Foreman-Cooney, Camacho-Paz.

July 1990: *KO* Interview—Sugar Ray Leonard. Color Pinup: Jorge Paez. Also: Michael Nunn, Buster Douglas, Jibaro Perez, the Olympians.

Aug. 1990: Meldrick Taylor: Brilliance In Defeat. Color Pinup: Buster Douglas. Interview: Teddy Atlas. Also: Buddy McGirt, Dokes-Ruddock, Simon Brown.

Sept. 1990: *KO* Interview—Buster Douglas. Color Pinup: Macho Camacho. Also: Thomas Hearns, Nigel Benn, Greg Haugen, Boxing Hall of Fame.

Oct. 1990: Send In The Clown: Is Jorge Paez A Phenom Or A Fraud? Color Pinup: Paul Banke. Interview: Tony Lopez. Also: Chavez-Taylor II, Jesse Benavides.

Nov. 1990: The Comeback Of Mike Tyson: A Crooked Course Straight To The Top. Color Pinup: Tony Lopez. Interview: Don Dunphy. Also: Davis-Breland, Riddick Bowe, federal commission.

Dec. 1990: The Heart Of The Matter: Who Will Survive The Holyfield-Douglas War? Color Pinup: Terry Norris. Interview: Virgil Hill. Also: Michael Carbajal, Ruelas Brothers, best fighter poll.

Jan. 1991: Macho Ado About Nothing? Why Hector Camacho Wants To Be Believed. Color Pinup: Meldrick Taylor. Interview: Irving Rudd. Also: Sugar Ray Leonard, Orlando Canizales, Vinny Pazienza.

Feb. 1991: 10 Fighters To Fear: Boxing's Most Destructive Hitters. Color Pinup: Razor Ruddock. Interview: Ray Mercer. Also: Roberto Duran, Saoul Mamby, Mills Lane, Sugar Ray Robinson.

April 1991: The Ali Chronicles (First Of A Series). Color Pinup: George Foreman. Interview: Tommy Morrison. Also: Tyson-Stewart, Razor Ruddock, Leonard-Norris preview.

May 1991: Ruddock Eyes The Big Upset Of Tyson. Color Pinup: Luisito Espinosa. Interview: Jeff Fenech. Also: Virgil Hill, Pernell Whitaker, Alex Ramos, Simon Brown, Buddy McGirt.

June 1991: Exclusive *KO* Interview: Evander Holyfield. Color Pinup: Raul Perez. Also: Norris-Leonard, Charles Williams, champs of 1971 vs. 1991, J.C. Chavez.

July 1991: Riddick Bowe: Is He Destined To Be Heavyweight Champ? Color Pinup: Michael Carbajal. Interview: Buddy McGirt. Also: Bobby Czyz, Buster Douglas, Mark Breland.

Aug. 1991: Desert Storm II: Will The Tyson-Ruddock Rematch Be Different? Color Pinup: Loreto Garza. Interview: Michael Carbajal. Also: Brown-Blocker, Fenech-Nelson preview, Harold Brazier, Yuh-Carbajal.

Sept. 1991: Remember Me? I Won The Fight! What "The Real Deal" Still Has To Deal With. Color Pinup: Ray Mercer. Interview: Eddie Futch. Also: Larry Holmes, southpaw heavyweights, Toney-Nunn, Brown-Taylor.

Oct. 1991: Thomas Hearns Works Another Miracle! Now There Are More Hills Left To Climb. Color Pinup: Humberto Gonzalez. Interview: Mike McCallum. Also: Norris-Curry, Richard Steele, Troy Dorsey.

Nov. 1991: Mike Tyson—The Only Heavyweight That Matters. Color Pinup: Thomas Hearns. Interview: Troy Dorsey. Also: Fenech-Nelson, James Toney, bodypunching.

Dec. 1991: Tyson vs. Holyfield—The Experts Analyze The Elements That Will Decide The Fight. Color Pinup: Joey Gamache. Also: Michael Moorer, Pernell Whitaker, Greg Richardson, Robert Quiroga.

Jan. 1992: The Tyson-Holyfield Showdown: An Exclusive Forecast By George Foreman. Color Pinup: Myung Woo Yuh. Also: Fenech-Nelson, TV announcers, boxing's toughest men, Toney-McCallum.

March 1992: *KO* Interview Mike Tyson: An In-Depth, Toe-To-Toe Talk With Boxing's Biggest Star. Color Pinup: Michael Moorer. Also: Thomas Hearns, Tracy Patterson, Larry Holmes, best fighter poll.

May 1992: Division-By-Division Faceoffs: The Best Of '92 vs. The Best Of '67. Color Pinup: James Warring. Interview: Hector Camacho. Also: Tommy Morrison, Bert Cooper, Gianfranco Rosi.

June 1992: If Not Tyson Or Holyfield, Then Who? Bowe? Moorer? Ruddock? Lewis? Mercer? Color Pinup: James Toney. Interview: Shelly Finkel. Also: Scotty Olson, overrated and underrated fighters, Orlin Norris, Whitaker-Pineda.

July 1992: The Title Reign of Evander Holyfield: A Reason To Hide ... Or A Reason For Pride? Color Pinup: Buddy McGirt. Interview: Julian Jackson. Also: Kelley-Dorsey, Nelson-Fenech, Kennedy McKinney.

Aug. 1992: Bowe Knows The Big Fight: The Top Contender Analyzes Holmes-Holyfield. Color Pinup: Julian Jackson. Interview: Michael Spinks. Also: Thomas Hearns, Blue Horizon, fighting fear, Toney-Barkley, Greg Haugen.

Sept. 1992: Can Tommy Morrison Punch Out The Theory ... White Men Can't Fight. Color Pinup: Welcome Ncita. Interview: Ken Norton. Also: Reggie Johnson, Jimmy Paul, McGirt-Blocker, Ali-Shavers.

Oct. 1992: The Olympics: Golden Memories ... And Golden Futures? Color Pinup: Reggie Johnson. Interview: Bobby Czyz. Also: Gerard Hernandez, Terry Norris.

Nov. 1992: Foreman vs. Holmes: The Fight Evander Holyfield Should Have Prevented. Color Pinup: Iran Barkley. Interview: Joey Gamache. Also: Hector Camacho, Tracy Patterson, Rudy Zavala.

Dec. 1992: The Final Four: Ruddock vs. Lewis, Holyfield vs. Bowe. Color Pinup: Gerard Hernandez. Interview: Lennox Lewis. Also: Whitaker-Pineda, Bowe-Coetzer, Alex Stewart, Gamache-Lopez.

Jan. 1993: Holyfield vs. Bowe: Who Will Win And Why. Color Pinup: Al Cole. Interview: Vinny Pazienza. Also: James Toney, Terrence Ali, Maurice Blocker.

Feb. 1993: Strictly Business: George Foreman Fights For The Love Of It—The Money! Color Pinup: Vinny Pazienza. Interview: George Benton. Also: Tracy Spann, Oba Carr, greatest eras.

March 1993: Not Just Another English Muffin: Lennox Lewis Powers His Way Toward The Title. Color Pinup: Leeonzer Barber. Interview: Emanuel Steward. Also: Reggie Johnson, Lopez-Gamache, USA Network.

May 1993: Recapping The Future: Julio Cesar Chavez' Road To 100-0. Color Pinup: Terry Norris. Interview: Junior Jones. Also: Buddy McGirt, Riddick Bowe, Raul Marquez.

Dec. 1993: The *KO* Feud Rages On: "I Will Torture You!" Says Riddick Bowe To Lennox Lewis. Color Pinup: Kennedy McKinney. Also: Mississippi boxing, George Foreman, Yori Boy Campas , Carbajal-Kim, Morrison-Moorer.

June 1995: The Tug-Of-War Over Mike Tyson. Color Pinup: Wilfredo Vasquez. Interview: Oliver McCall. Also: Alejandro Gonzalez, Alexis Arguello, Kostya Tszyu.

June 1996: Destined For The Hall Of Fame: Who's In, Who's Out. Color Pinup: Wayne McCullough. Interview: Cedric Kushner. Also: Danny Romero, Mark Breland, Dynamite Dozen—the next 12.

Sept. 1996: Tyson vs. Seldon. Don't Bet On This Fight Until You've Read This Story! Color Pinup: Arturo Gatti. Interview: Butterbean. Also: Dana Rosenblatt, '92 Olympians, McGuigan-Pedroza.

Nov. 1996 **(Special 88-Page Edition): The *KO* 100.** Color Pinup: Terry Norris. Interview: Bob Arum. Also: Roy Jones, Roberto Duran, Joe Cortez.

Dec. 1996: Andrew Golota—Taking The Low Road to Stardom. Color Pinup: Mark Johnson. Interview: Rock Newman. Also: De La Hoya-Gonzalez, Chuck Bodak, bizarre endings, Chavez-Rosario.

Winter 1996: This Is War! Holyfield-Tyson Will Be Explosive ... And Short. Color Pinup: Roy Jones. Interview: Bernard Hopkins. Also: Riddick Bowe, David Reid, Holyfield-Qawi.

Jan. 1997 (Special 88-Page Edition): Bowe-Golota II: Hatred And Vengeance ... It's A Beautiful Thing! Color Pinup: Johnny Tapia. Interview: Lou Duva. Also: Mouse Strauss, heavyweight rematches, Azumah Nelson.

Feb. 1997: *KO*'s 1997 Wish List. Color Pinup: Ike Quartey. Interview: Naseem Hamed. Also: David Tua, Felix Trinidad, Adolpho Washington, Bobby Czyz.

March 1997: Holyfield's Trainer Tells All! An Inside Look At The Upset Of The Year. Color Pinup: Vinny Pazienza. Interview: Sugar Ray Leonard. Also: George Foreman, Lupe Pintor, boxing bill, Floyd Mayweather Jr.

Aug. 1997: Oscar Reaches ... But Can't Grasp The Stars. Color Pinup: Nate Miller. Interview: Hector Camacho. Also: Norris-Trinidad preview, Hall of Fame, Angel Manfredy.

Sept. 1997: A Legitimate Grudge Match! Why Romero-Tapia Could Be The Fight Of The Year. Color Pinup: Oscar De La Hoya. Interview: David Tua. Also: Ike Quartey, George Foreman, top promoters.

Nov. 1997: Filling In The Missing Pieces: What "The Bite" Means To Boxing. Color Pinup: Christy Martin. Interview: Jim Lampley. Also: Vince Phillips, British prospects, Iran Barkley.

Dec. 1997: Johnny Tapia Outshines Danny Romero: The Defining Moment In A "Crazy Life." Color Pinup: Genaro Hernandez. Interview: Frans Botha. Also: Lewis-Akiwande, Don King, Charles Brewer.

Holiday 1997 (Special 88-Page Edition): Holyfield-Moorer II: Can Evander Avenge His Ugliest Defeat? Color Pinup: Vince Phillips. Interview: Mills Lane. Also: Roy Jones, Baby Jake Matlala, Boxing 2000.

Jan. 1998: De La Hoya Humbles The Macho Man: "Oscar's The Best I've Ever Fought." Color Pinup: William Guthrie. Interview: Mark Johnson. Also: Johnny Tapia, Pinklon Thomas, defense.

Feb. 1998: Is Lennox Lewis The World's Best Heavyweight? Color Pinup: Charles Brewer. Interview: Marc Ratner. Also: Otis Grant, Arturo Gatti.

March 1998: Evander Holyfield: For The Real Deal, Lewis Is No Big Deal. Color Pinup: Lou Del Valle. Interview: Lennox Lewis. Also: David Izon, Meldrick Taylor, rapid weight loss.

May 1998: Living Up To The Hype: Sometimes They Do ... Sometimes They Don't. Color Pinup: David Reid. Interview: Best Of ... (Part III). Also: Naseem Hamed, Marty Denkin, women's boxing.

June 1998: Lewis vs. Holyfield: Why The Fight Of The Year Isn't Going To Happen. Color Pinup: Evander Holyfield. Interview: Eddie Futch. Also: Hector Lizarraga, pain, Head-To-Head review.

July 1998: Boxing's Hungry *B.A.D* Boyz: They Only Come Out At Night. Color Pinup: Angel Manfredy. Also: Reggie Johnson, Ike Ibeabuchi, 50 all-time fantasy matchups.

Aug. 1998: Lewis Bombs Out Briggs: Would The WBC Champ Do This To Holyfield? Color Pinup: Keith Mullings. Interview: Shane Mosley. Also: Pernell Whitaker, Marco Antonio Barrera, Roberto Garcia.

Sept. 1998: Can Mike Tyson Make A Successful Comeback? Sugar Ray Leonard Has The Answer. Color Pinup: Michael Grant. Interview: Brad Jacobs. Also: Naseem Hamed, Wayne McCullough, Kirk Johnson.

Oct. 1998: The Ultimate Fantasy Card. Color Pinup: Oscar De La Hoya. Interview: Roy Jones. Also: Brendan Ingle, NYPD boxing, prospect blueprint.

Nov. 1998 The *KO* 100. Color Pinup: Reggie Johnson. Interview: Tim Austin. Also: Cesar Bazan, Spencer Oliver, Bobby Czyz.

Dec. 1998: Winning Fights Is Easier Than Winning Fans: Why Can't We Appreciate Roy Jones? Color Pinup: Tim Austin. Interview: Michael Grant. Also: Christy Martin, Ali Reform Act, one-hit wonders.

Holiday 1998: Toe-To-Toe With The Top 10: Where Does Tyson Fit In? Color Pinup: Shane Mosley. Inteview: Larry Hazzard. Also: Evander Holyfield, junior middleweights.

Jan. 1999 (Special 88-Page Edition): Oscar Eliminates Chavez ... Now The Real Fights Begin! Color Pinup: Yory Boy Campas. Interview: William Joppy. Also: Mark Johnson, U.S.A. vs. the world.

Feb. 1999: Holyfield & Lewis: Did They Hurt Themselves Before They Could Hurt Each Other? Color Pinup: Andrew Golota. Interview: Angel Manfredy. Also: Mismatches, Bobby Czyz on watching fights.

March 1999: Exposed! Is Hamed Really Hector Camacho In Disguise? Color Pinup: Mike Tyson. Interview: Joe Frazier. Also: Zab Judah, Vuyani Bungu, Frankie Randall.

May 1999: The Tyson Of Old ... Or Just An Old Tyson? Color Pinup: Luisito Espinosa. Interview: Fernando Vargas. Also: Antonio Diaz, Sumya Anani, standing eight-count.

June 1999: Will Tyson's Jail Time Be A Career Killer? Color Pinup: Johnny Tapia. Interview: Floyd Mayweather. Also: Roy Jones, 1999 Hall of Fame.

July 1999 (Special 88-Page Edition): De La Hoya vs. Trinidad: The Fight The Public Demands ... But Is It Going To Happen? Color Pinup: David Tua. Interview: Tommy Brooks. Also: Floyd Mayweather, Tony Marshall, best of the century.

Aug. 1999: Lewis vs. Holyfield II: Should We Expect Anything Different Next Time? Color Pinup: Fernando Vargas. Interview: David Reid. Also: Ibeabuchi-Byrd, Melissa Salamone.

Sept. 1999: Mayweather vs. Mosley: Who's The Future Of Boxing? Color Pinup: James Page. Interview: J Russell Peltz. Also: Evander Holyfield, Thomas Hearns, Angel Manfredy.

Oct. 1999 (Special 88-Page Edition): The *KO* 100. Color Pinup: Felix Trinidad. Interview: Jake LaMotta. Also: Tony Ayala, Erik Morales, Junior Jones.

Nov. 1999: De La Hoya vs. Trinidad: "It's Gonna Come Down To Who The Hell Wants It Most!" Color Pinup: David Reid. Interview: Arturo Gatti. Also: Roy Jones, Sugar Shane Mosley, Vassily Jirov.

Dec. 1999: David Reid & Fernando Vargas: Olympic Teammates On A Collision Course! Color Pinup: Zab Judah. Interview: Ike Ibeabuchi. Also: Vitali Klitschko, Antonio Tarver, Mike Tyson.

Holiday 1999 (Special 88-Page Edition): Lewis-Holyfield II: Why We Demand A Knockout! Color Pinup: Sharmba Mitchell. Interview: Paulie Ayala. Also: James Toney, James Page & Terronn Millett, decade review.

Jan. 2000: Fool's Gold? Trinidad May Have Tarnished Oscar's Image Forever! Color Pinup: Paulie Ayala. Interview: Tony Ayala Jr. Also: David Reid, Johnny Nelson.

Feb. 2000: Breakout 2000: Who's Going To Lead The Way In Y2K? Color Pinup: Roy Jones. Interview: Bob Arum. Also: Shane Mosley, Wise-Chavez, Iran Barkley.

March 2000: Mike Tyson: "I'm Tired Of This Crap!" So Are We, Mike! Color Pinup: Vernon Forrest. Interview: James Page. Also: Erik Morales & Naseem Hamed, Diego Corrales, women's boxing.

May 2000: Michael Grant vs. Lennox Lewis—25 Insiders Pick The Winner. Color Pinup: Paul Spadafora. Interview: Dan Goossen. Also: Floyd Mayweather, Johnny Tapia, southpaws.

June 2000: Lewis vs. Grant: Who Will Win ... And Why. Color Pinup: Vitali Klitschko. Interview: Sharmba Mitchell. Also: Shane Mosley, David Izon, 2000 Hall of Fame.

July 2000: Today's Fighters, Tomorrow's Hall Of Famers. Color Pinup: Keith Holmes. Interview: Shane Mosley. Also: Zab Judah, Morales-Barrera, Wayne Braithwaite.

Aug. 2000: Mosley Prepares For Oscar: "It Will Be Like The First Round Of Hagler-Hearns." Color Pinup: Erik Morales. Interview: Chris Byrd. Also: Vargas-Quartey, Thomas Hearns, Felix Trinidad, common sense vs. cowardice.

Sept. 2000: Now Vargas Is Ready For Trinidad & De La Hoya. Color Pinup: Erik Morales. Interview: Chris Byrd. Also: Trinidad vs. all-time greats, Thomas Hearns, common sense vs. cowardice.

Oct. 2000 (Special 88-Page Edition): The *KO* 100. Color Pinup: Floyd Mayweather. Interview: Stevie Johnston. Also: Clifford Etienne, overhyped heavyweights.

Nov. 2000: Sugar Rush! Mosley Achieves Superstardom At Oscar's Expense. Color Pinup: Lennox Lewis. Interview: Jay Larkin. Also: David Tua, Oleg Maskaev, Ben Tackie.

Dec. 2000: Mike Tyson vs. Lennox Lewis: 15 Insiders Pick The Winner. Color Pinup: Shane Mosley. Interview: Frank Maloney. Also: Oscar De La Hoya, Bronco McKart, our heroes' heroes. [FULL-COLOR BEGINNING FEBRUARY 2001]

Feb. 2001: Fernando Vargas' Internal Battle: If He Can't Win It, He Can't Beat Trinidad. Interview: Evander Holyfield. Also: Derrick Gainer, Roy Jones, Naseem Hamed.

April 2001: Lewis Is Too Much For Tua ... But Could Tyson Do Any Better? Interview: Max Kellerman. Also: Floyd Mayweather, Wladimir Klitschko.

June 2001: Trinidad-Jones: Superfight Or Mismatch? Interview: Virgil Hill. Also: Mayweather-Corrales, Paul Ingle, Davey Hilton, Tyson's relationship with Vargas, Judah, and Mayweather.

Aug. 2001: Sugar Shane Mosley: Too Sweet For The Bad Boy Era? Interview: Richard Steele. Also: Evander Holyfield, Roy Jones, Jesus Chavez.

Oct. 2001: Tito Power—From Fans To Foes ... Everyone's Feeling It! Interview: Lou DiBella. Also: Hasim Rahman, Vargas-Rivera, F.I.S.T.

Dec. 2001: Laila Ali: The Fighter, The Sex Symbol ... The Future Of Women's Boxing? Interview: Laila Ali. Also: Oscar De La Hoya, Tim Austin, Manny Pacquiao, Hector Camacho Jr.

Feb. 2002: Bernard Hopkins: "I Am The American Dream. I Am The American Story." Interview: Wladimir Klitschko. Also: Omar Sheika, Vernon Forrest, Juan Lazcano.

April 2002: After Hitting Rock Bottom ... Lennox Is Back On The Path To Greatness. Interview: Duva Boxing. Also: Zab Judah, Mike Tyson, Thomas Tate.

June 2002: Tyson vs. Lewis: 10-Page Preview & Analysis. Interview: Jameel McCline. Also: *Ali* movie, Dorin vs. Balbi & Ward vs. Leija.

Aug. 2002: Still Crazy After All These Years: Should Mike Tyson Be Allowed To Fight? Interview: Kostya Tszyu. Also: Barrera-Morales II preview, Ayala-Adams, Ricky Hatton.

Oct. 2002: Vernon Forrest vs. Shane Mosley: Two Careers On The Line! Interview: Fernando Vargas. Also: Mayweather-Castillo, Hopkins vs. all-time greats, heavyweight scrap heap.

Dec. 2002: Wladimir Klitschko: Would He Be Too Much For Lennox? Interview: Joe Calzaghe. Also: Barrera-Morales II, Evander Holyfield, Freddie Roach.

Winter 2002: A Realistic Look At Tyson's Comeback: He Can't Make History, But He Can Make Millions. Interview: Micky Ward. Also: Antonio Tarver, Antwun Echols, Acelino Freitas.

☐ JUN/83	☐ DEC/87	☐ AUG/91	☐ AUG/97	☐ FEB/00
☐ AUG/83	☐ JAN/88	☐ SEP/91	☐ DEC/97	☐ MAR/00
☐ OCT/83	☐ FEB/88	☐ OCT/91	☐ HOL/97	☐ MAY/00
☐ JUL/84	☐ MAY/88	☐ NOV/91	☐ JAN/98	☐ JUN/00
☐ AUG/84	☐ JUL/88	☐ DEC/91	☐ FEB/98	☐ JUL/00
☐ OCT/84	☐ AUG/88	☐ JAN/92	☐ MAR/98	☐ AUG/00
☐ NOV/84	☐ SEP/88	☐ MAR/92	☐ MAY/98	☐ SEP/00
☐ JAN/85	☐ OCT/88	☐ MAY/92	☐ JUN/98	☐ OCT/00
☐ FEB/85	☐ DEC/88	☐ JUN/92	☐ JUL/98	☐ NOV/00
☐ MAR/85	☐ JAN/89	☐ JUL/92	☐ AUG/98	☐ DEC/OO
☐ MAY/85	☐ FEB/89	☐ AUG/92	☐ SEP/98	☐ FEB/01
☐ JUL/85	☐ AUG/89	☐ SEP/92	☐ NOV/98	☐ APR/01
☐ AUG/85	☐ SEP/89	☐ OCT/92	☐ DEC/98	☐ JUN/01
☐ OCT/85	☐ FEB/90	☐ NOV/92	☐ HOL/98	☐ AUG/01
☐ NOV/85	☐ JUN/90	☐ DEC/92	☐ JAN/99	☐ OCT/01
☐ DEC/85	☐ JUL/90	☐ JAN/93	☐ FEB/99	☐ DEC/01
☐ JAN/86	☐ AUG/90	☐ FEB/93	☐ MAR/99	☐ FEB/02
☐ FEB/86	☐ SEP/90	☐ MAR/93	☐ MAY/99	☐ APR/02
☐ JUL/86	☐ OCT/90	☐ MAY/93	☐ JUN/99	☐ JUN/02
☐ OCT/86	☐ NOV/90	☐ JUN/95	☐ JUL/99	☐ AUG/02
☐ DEC/86	☐ DEC/90	☐ JUN/96	☐ AUG/99	☐ OCT/02
☐ FEB/87	☐ JAN/91	☐ SEP/96	☐ SEP/99	☐ DEC/02
☐ MAY/87	☐ FEB/91	☐ NOV/96	☐ OCT/99	☐ WIN/02
☐ JUN/87	☐ APR/91	☐ DEC/96	☐ NOV/99	
☐ AUG/87	☐ MAY/91	☐ WIN/96	☐ DEC/99	
☐ OCT/87	☐ JUN/91	☐ JAN/97	☐ HOL/99	
☐ NOV/87	☐ JUL/91	☐ MAR/97	☐ JAN/00	

KO MAGAZINE

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE AND MAIL TO:
LONDON PUBLISHING CO.
BOX 910
FT. WASHINGTON, PA 19034

ONLY $5 EACH

Please send me the back issues I've checked. I enclose $_____ as payment in full. PRINT YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS CLEARLY

Name _____

Address _____ **Apt.** _____

_____

City _____

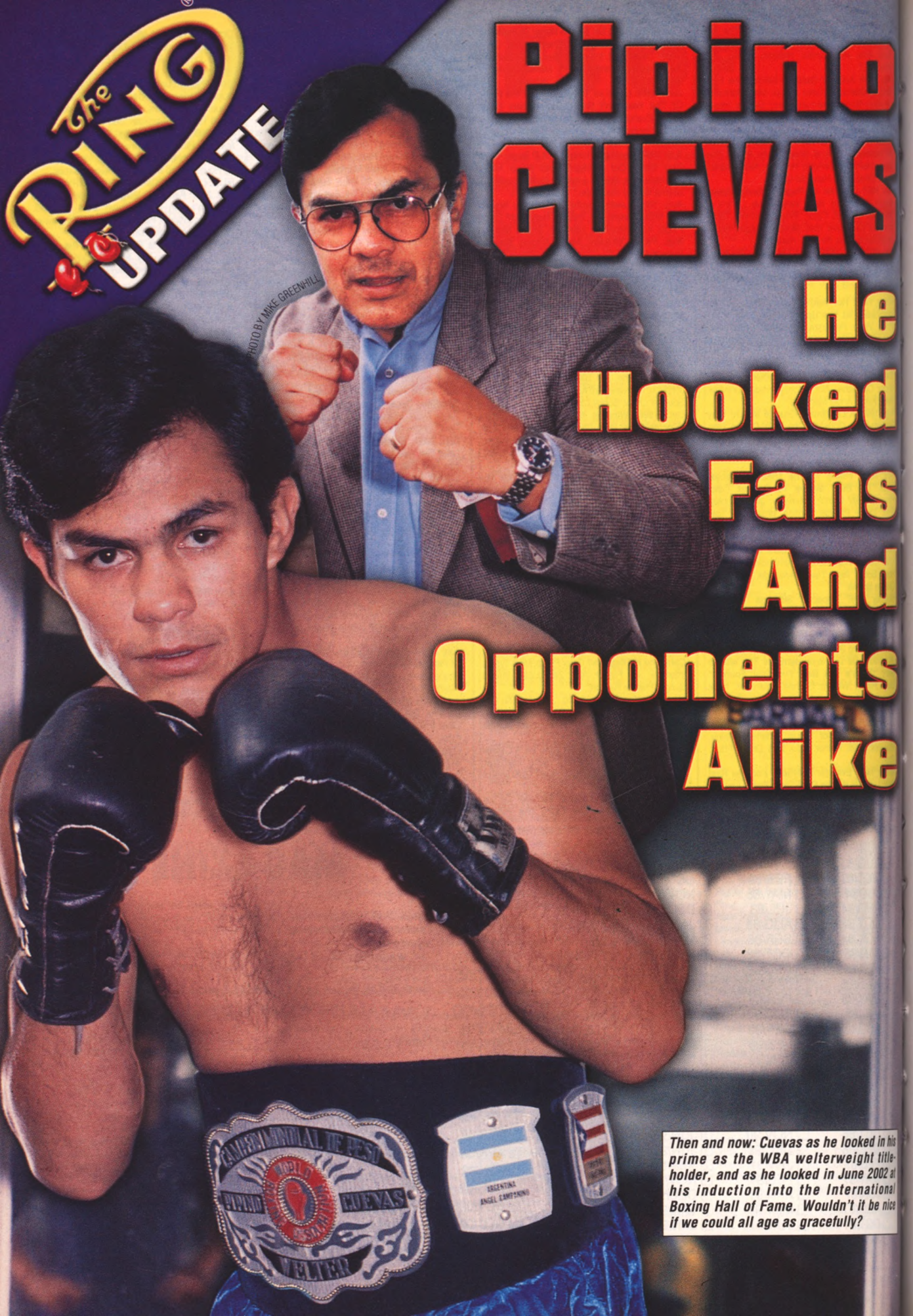
State _____ **Zip** _____

For all orders except the U.S., you must add $1.50 for every back issue to be sent boat mail, and $3 for every back issue to be sent airmail. Int'l money order in U.S. funds only.
Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery
In case of a sellout, indicate substitute choice: _____

5988/10-02

Pipino CUEVAS

He Hooked Fans And Opponents Alike



Then and now: Cuevas as he looked in his prime as the WBA welterweight titleholder, and as he looked in June 2002 at his induction into the International Boxing Hall of Fame. Wouldn't it be nice if we could all age as gracefully?

By **Robert Cassidy**

Pipino Cuevas was once one of Mexico's greatest boxing idols. His electrifying power thrilled fans both south and north of the border. His fights were a matter of national pride in Mexico and were considered can't-miss events in Los Angeles.

It is not often that one gets the chance to see an enshrined member of boxing's Hall of Fame in the ring, but there are still occasions when one can get a glimpse of Cuevas. No, at the age of 45, he is not making a comeback. He's already done that. But Cuevas will still lace up the gloves and climb into the ring if the cause is worthy. To him, such causes include charities for children and raising funds for hospitals and homes for senior citizens.

"I put on a lot of exhibitions in Mexico," said Cuevas. "I do it to raise money for all kinds of charities. I take about 10 boxers with me and we travel all over Mexico. We put on a good show."

While Mexico's quiet assassin now fights for the fun, he clearly still enjoys the rigors of training. He looks to be in very good shape, but admitted that today he is more of a middleweight than the lean 147-pounder who terrorized the welterweight division more than 20 years ago.

"I still run, I still do my roadwork," he said. "I get into the ring and spar. I do everything I've always done, jump rope, hit the bags. I still love it."

When he's not fighting for charity, Cuevas spends much of his time running a meatpacking plant that he owns in Mexico City, where he resides with his wife and three children.

It was Cuevas' father who led him into a life of boxing, but he is reluctant to do the same with his own children. His oldest son, Cristian, 22, is an accountant, and Ivan, 20, is studying to be a journalist. Cuevas shakes his head and laughs when he talks about his 16-year-old daughter, Bricelda.

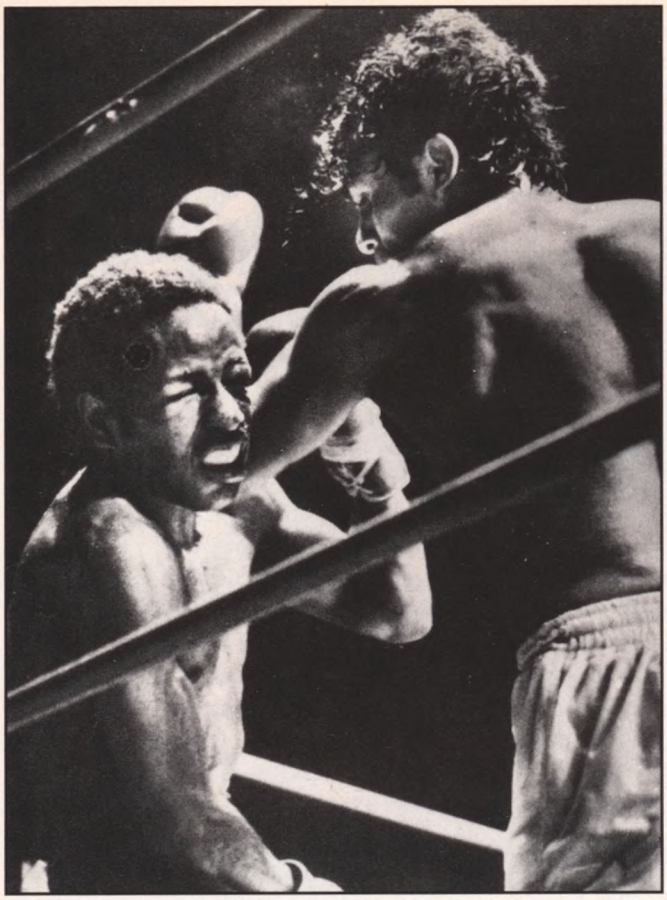
"She is the one who loves boxing the most," he said. "She wants to be a fighter."

The entire family made the trip to Canastota, New York, for his induction into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in June. It was there that Cuevas and translator Juan Kassab took time to sit down with THE RING. Cuevas spoke about his career in measured, modest tones. Speaking about himself, or even speaking in general, has never been one of Cuevas' favorite activities.

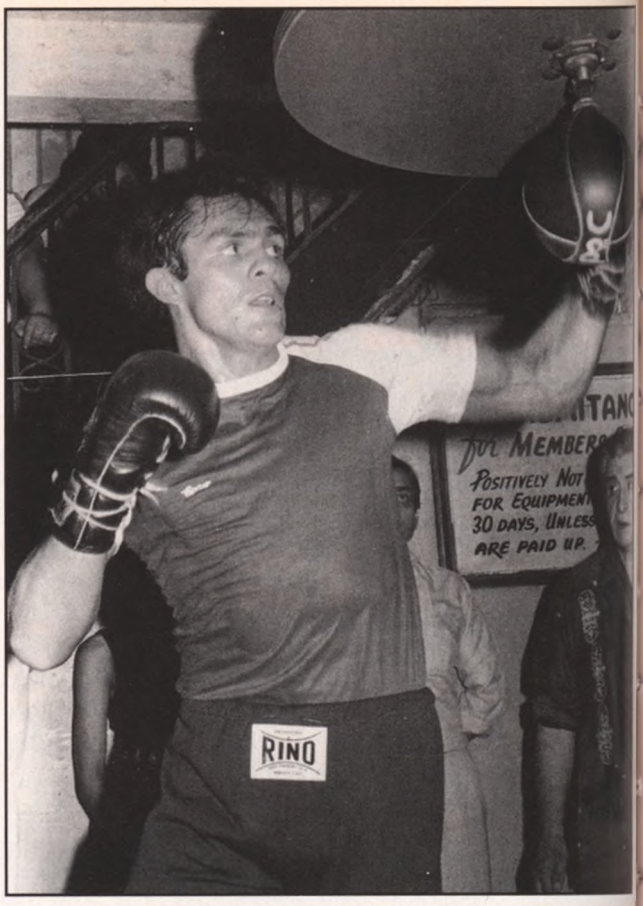
"He was always very, very quiet," said Hall of Fame promoter Don Chargin, who made several matches for Cuevas at the Olympic Auditorium. "The guy never spoke. He may have seemed quiet in Canastota, but compared to the way he used to be, he was very outgoing. I told his wife that he said more in five minutes than I ever heard him say before."

In his brief induction speech, Cuevas said, "The boxing career is a career of many sacrifices. But I do believe it's worth all of the sacrifices to be here with you all. I want you all to know that I am happier

Shoji Tsujimoto samples Cuevas' famous left hook. The Japanese challenger was knocked out in the sixth round of Cuevas' first defense of the WBA welterweight title he won from Angel Espada via second-round kayo in July 1976.



New Yorker Harold Weston was another quality fighter that Cuevas defended against. When they met in Los Angeles in March 1978, the Mexican slugger put Weston away in the ninth round.



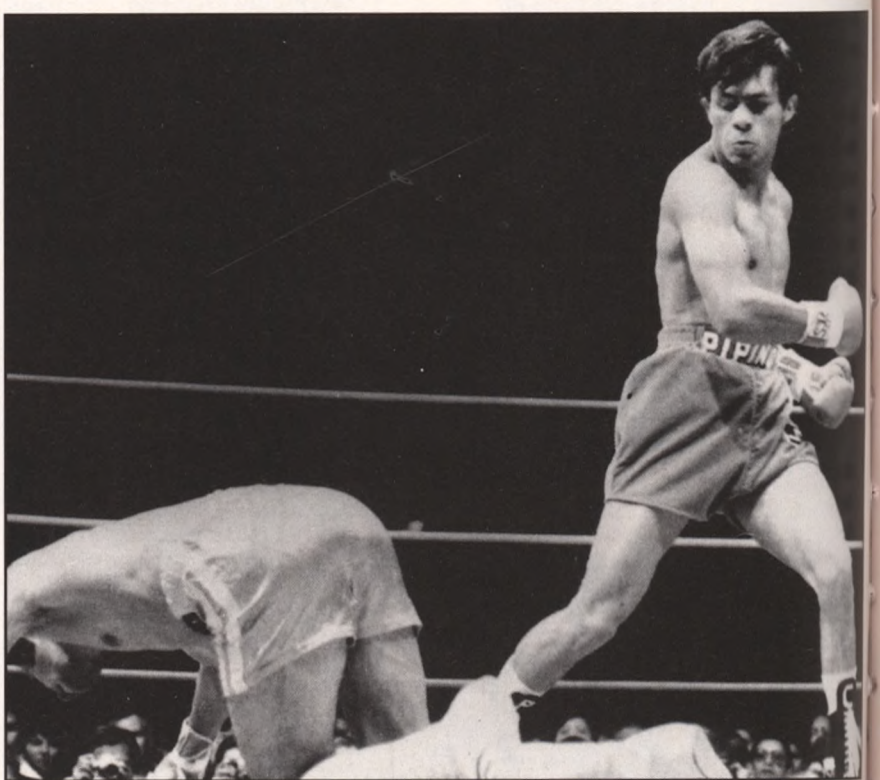
Cuevas works out with the speedbag during his championship days. Some 25 years later, Cuevas still runs, spars, jumps rope, and hits the bag regularly. He also boxes in exhibitions for charity.

today to be inducted into this Hall of Fame than when I first won the world championship."

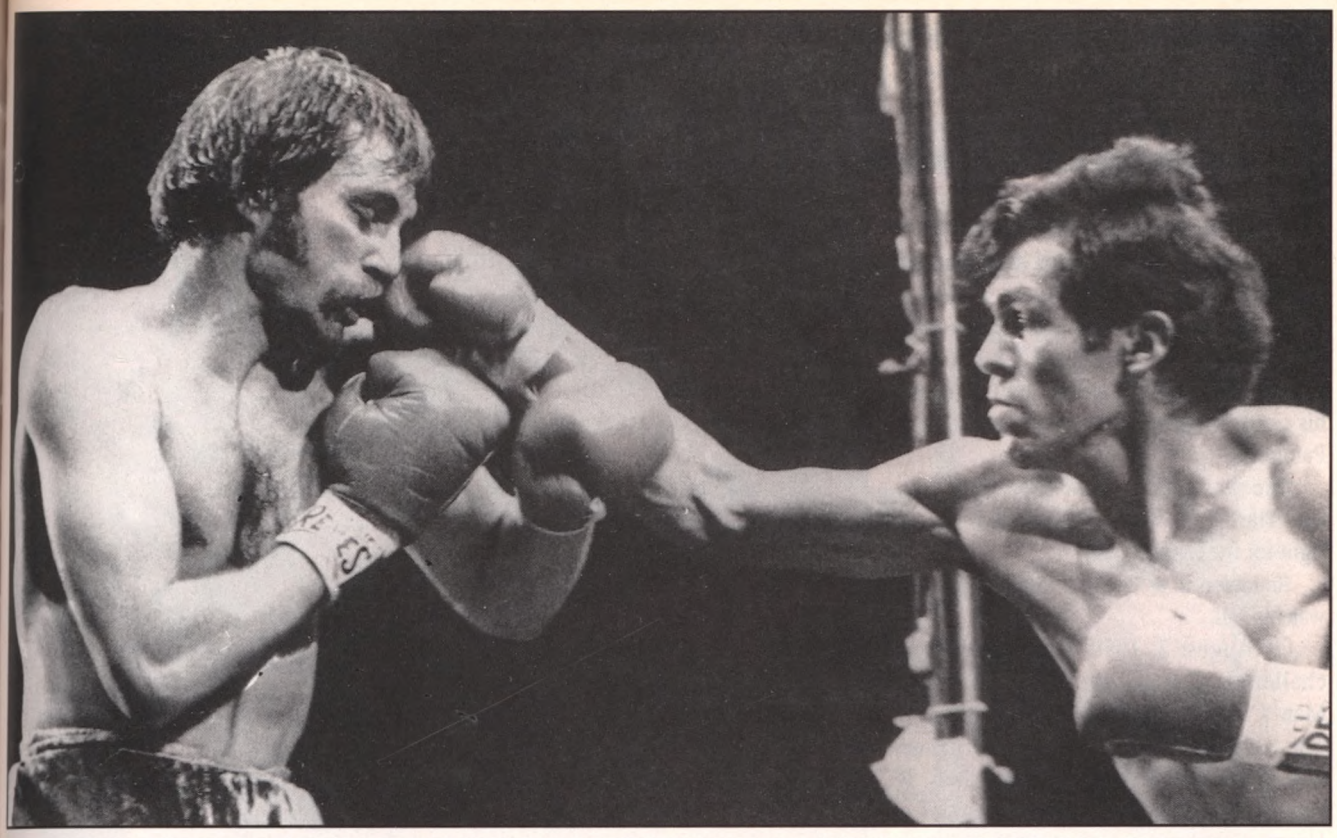
Like many great Mexican fighters, Cuevas was drawn to boxing while still very young. His father first took him to a gym at the age of 10. Among his boxing heroes were two-division former champ and Hall of Famer Ruben Olivares and former bantamweight contender Jose Medel.

Cuevas turned pro on New Year's Day 1972, five days after his 14th birthday. He won by knockout in his first fight, but his inexperience showed early in his career. He lost four times in his first 11 fights. But each victory he scored came via knockout. One thing was certain: This pugilistic prodigy had incredible power in his left hook.

By the time he was 17, he was Mexico's national welterweight champion. At 18, he dropped WBA titleholder Angel Espada three times en route to a second-round knockout in Mexicali, Mexico. The win earned him a place in the record books as the youngest 147-pound champion in history.



Cuevas was a huge draw with Mexican and Mexican-American fans. Challenger Miguel Campanino is pictured going down and out in the second round of a March 1977 title bid in Mexico City.



Cuevas proves he has a right hand as well as a left, popping Pete Ranzany during their September 1978 title fight in Sacramento.

"I would say that was my greatest moment, when I first won the world championship against Espada," Cuevas said. "I was unknown. No one expected much from me. I still watch that fight over and over at home."

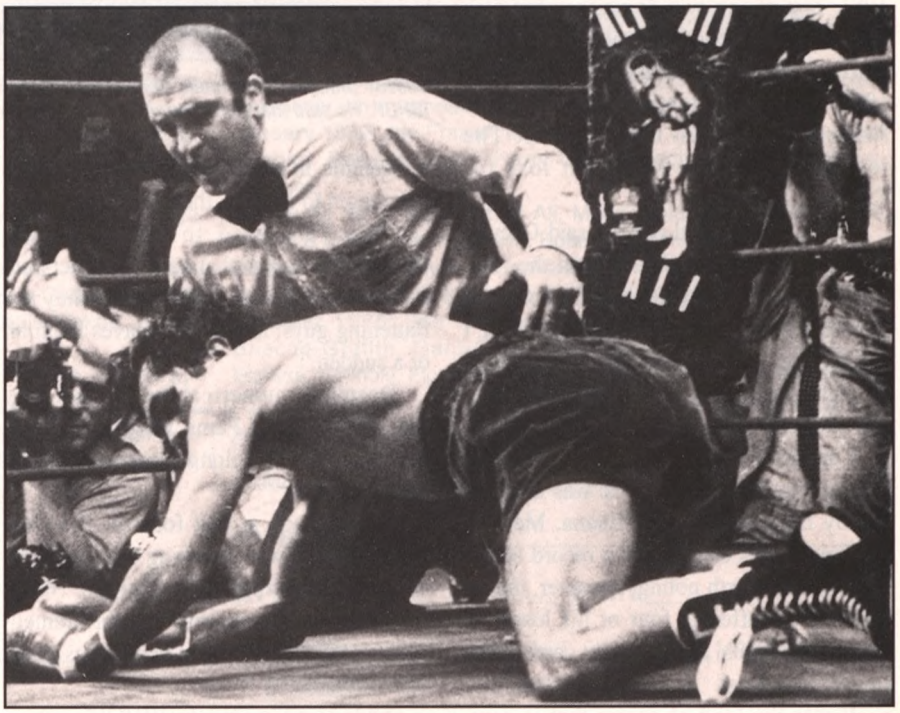
He may have been an unknown when he won the belt, but that wouldn't last for long. His exhilarating power elevated him to stardom within the sport. Cuevas would make 11 successful title defenses, including 10 by knockout. The only fighter to last the 15-round distance was Randy Shields, in 1979. Among Cuevas' knockout victims were Miguel Campanino, Harold Weston, Billy Backus, Pete Ranzany, and Espada, twice more.

Cuevas, ever popular in Mexico, was also generating large gates at the Olympic Auditorium in Los Angeles and The Great Western Forum in Inglewood, California.

"He would sell out the Olympic, which at that time held 10,400," recalled Chargin. "Then we'd offer the fight to local theaters on closed-circuit television, and the theaters would sell out. He was everything the Mexican fight fan loved; he was a warrior and a good puncher."

Remembering the excitement of that time, Cuevas said, "I just loved fighting. I loved fighting in Los Angeles, in Mexico. All the arenas would get filled and they'd have to put the extra people into movie theaters. It wasn't the arenas that made the fights special, it was the people inside of them. Seeing all of those people was a very good feeling."

There was one fight that eluded Cuevas during his prime and that was a matchup against Carlos Palomino, who held the WBC



Cuevas never recovered from the big right hand that Thomas Hearns drilled him with in the second round of their August 1980 title bout in Detroit. After that, Cuevas fought sporadically until 1989, but never regained the title. His post-Hearns record was 8-8.

title around the same time. The Mexican against the Mexican-born Californian would have been a natural for Los Angeles.

"I thought for sure we'd get that fight made," said Chargin. "Somehow it never happened. I guess politics played a role. We had Palomino and Cuevas, but then Cuevas left us, and it never happened. If that fight ever happened, there wouldn't have been a venue big enough to hold everyone."

Cuevas insists he has no regrets about his career or the missed opportunity to face Palomino.

"He was a very good champion," he said flatly. "It would have been a good fight for the fans."

As meteoric as Cuevas' rise was, so too was his fall.

On August 2, 1980, he met unbeaten challenger Thomas Hearns in "The Hit Man's" hometown of Detroit, Michigan. The fight, a matchmaker's dream, paired two of the game's most lethal punchers. It ended in the second round courtesy of a Hearns right hand.

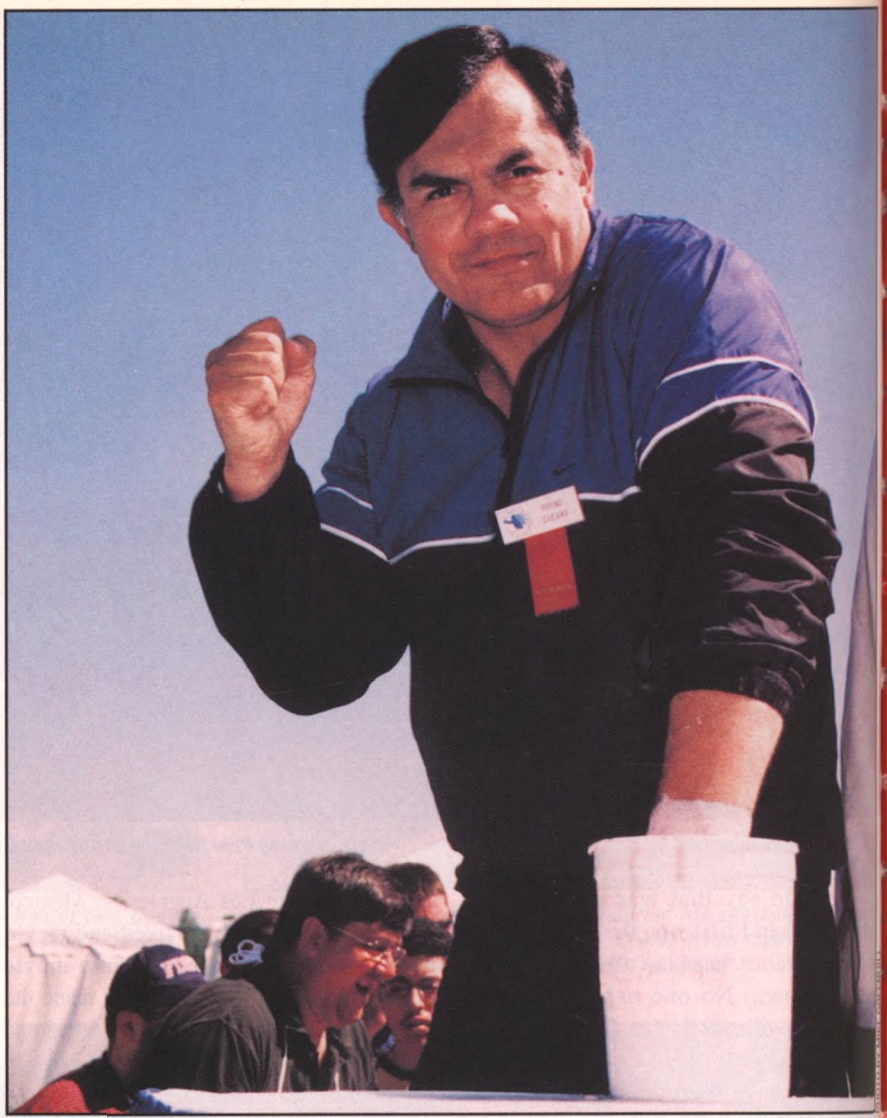
"He beat me outright," Cuevas said. "The first round he hit me with a right hand, and I couldn't recuperate. The second round he hit me with a second right, and my manager stopped the fight."

Cuevas would fight three times in 1981, registering two knockouts but also dropping a 10-round decision to Roger Stafford. He remained inactive throughout 1982, but would fight Roberto Duran in January of 1983 in Los Angeles. The result was another knockout loss for Cuevas.

"He's a very good boxer," said Cuevas. "I didn't see him as a savage in the ring. People don't realize that about Duran. I got hit with a hard right hand and I went down. I got back up, but again my manager stopped the fight. Duran was a great champion. He's a good friend and a wonderful man."

Cuevas would continue fighting sporadically until 1989, when he was knocked out by Lupe Aquino in Tijuana, Mexico. He finished his career with a record of 35-15 (31). It's worth noting, however, that in addition to suffering four of his losses in his first 11 fights, another eight came in his final 14 bouts.

It was the kind of career that is common among some of the game's big punchers. They are explosive and seemingly unbeatable in their prime years, but once they begin to decline, the fall is rapid.



Cuevas plunges his famous left fist into a bucket of casting jell during induction weekend at the IBHOF. He said that being voted into the Hall was an even bigger thrill than winning the title.

"It's very hard to explain," said Chargin. "It seems that some punchers put so much into those fights when they are flattening guys, and then it leaves them all of a sudden."

Despite a numerical record that may not seem Hall of Fame worthy, Chargin believes Cuevas belongs among boxing's all-time greats.

"If you look at that four- or five-year span when he was knocking everyone out, he was devastating," said Chargin. "When you consider his success and his tremendous popularity, I believe he belongs in the Hall of Fame."

Added Ed Brophy, the IBHOF's executive director: "Upon reviewing Pipino Cuevas' career accomplishments, it becomes evident why he was one of the standout fighters of his era. He used a vicious left hook to dominate the welterweight division for nearly four years. He's earned his spot as an all-time great."

To Cuevas, the task of assessing his career belongs to others. The quiet warrior admitted that he was surprised to learn of his induction.

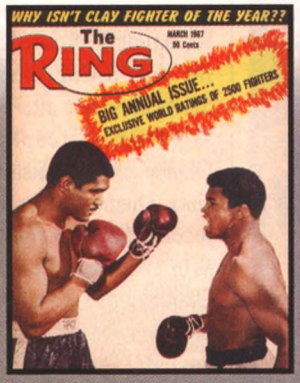
"I did not expect this," he said. "Of course, it's something I thought about, but it's not for me to judge, to know how people felt when I fought. But I am very proud and honored to be here."

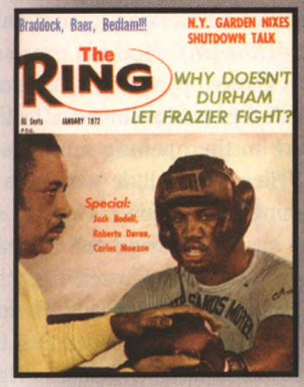
If Cuevas was unsure how his career would be remembered and rated, his enshrinement should remove any doubts. ■

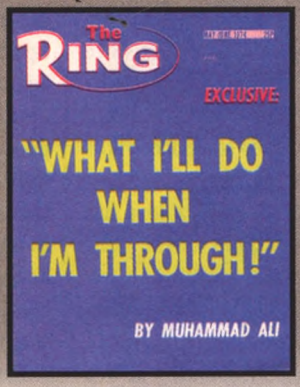
Robert Cassidy is a former associate editor of this magazine and a regular contributor.

A RARE FIND FOR COLLECTORS!

A recent inventory of our Pennsylvania warehouse has uncovered several editions of *The Ring* that had been unavailable for years. The supply on these rare collectors' items is very small and they will go quickly!







October 1953: Marciano-LaStarza preview, Don Cockell, Tod Morgan, New York fighters, TV and boxing.
August 1955: Rocky Marciano, Carmen Basilio, Carmelo Costa, Moore-Olson, Art Fletcher, columns by Nat Fleischer and Dan Daniel.
April 1962: Patterson-Liston preview, Tony Canzoneri, Jorge Fernandez, Dick Tiger, split crowns, Caribbean contenders.
March 1967: Annual Issue—1966: Year in Review, Fighter of the Year award withheld from Muhammad Ali, Torres-Cotton (Fight of the Year), Ali-Terrell, Choinoi-McGowan, Curtis Cokes, Roger Rouse, Dick Tiger.
January 1968: Quarry-Patterson, Frazier-Doyle, Saldivar-Winstone, Garland "Rip" Randall, Emille Griffith, Georges Carpentier, all-time heavyweight tournament.
January 1972: Joe Frazier, Monzon-Griffith, Vicente Saldivar, Chris Dundee, Roberto Duran, Harry Greb, Rodolfo Martinez, Pinder-Vasquez.
May-June 1974: Muhammad Ali, Monzon-Napoles, Adolfo Viruet, Norton & Futch, Andries Steyn, Bobby Chacon.
August 1975: Ali-Lyle, Galindez-Elson, heavyweight contenders, Ken Norton, Eddie Gregory, Cooper-Love, Carlos Monzon.
October 1976: Joe Frazier, Archie Moore, Monzon-Valdes, Briscoe-Griffith, Gant-Gonzalez, Escalera-Yamabe, Cuevas-Espada, Ali-Inoki, Floyd Mayweather, Harry Gibbs, Ferdie Pacheco.

Please send me the issues I have checked off below. I an enclosing a check or money order in the amount of $35 for each issue or provided my credit card information.

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE AND MAIL TO:
LONDON PUBLISHING CO.
P.O. BOX 910
FORT WASHINGTON, PA 19034

Please indicate method of payment:

☐ Check or money order (enclosed and payable to London Publishing Co.)
☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard
Credit Card # _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
Expiration Date: ___/___ MO/YR
Signature:_____

PRINT YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS CLEARLY

NAME _____

ADDRESS_____**APT.**_____

CITY_____**STATE**_____ **ZIP** _____

☐ OCT/53	☐ MAR/67	☐ MAY-JUN/74
☐ AUG/55	☐ JAN/68	☐ AUG/75
☐ APR/62	☐ JAN/72	☐ OCT/76

For all orders outside the U.S. and Canada, you must add $1.50 for every copy ordered to be delivered by surface mail or $3 to be delivered by airmail. International money orders in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

5992/11-02

The RING

COLLECTOR'S ISSUES ARE GOING FAST!

Previously sold only on newsstands, these special issues of THE RING are now available through mail order while supplies last.

FAMOUS FIGHTS

Our editors dip into the most extensive boxing photo file in the world to bring you 18 of the greatest fights of all-time.

75 YEARS OF THE RING

The official souvenir magazine of THE RING's 75th Anniversary celebration traces the history of the Sweet Science during THE RING years, 1922-1997.

GREATS OF THE GAME

THE RING examines the careers of the fight game's megastars: Tyson, De La Hoya, Mosley, Jones, Trinidad, Mayweather, Barrera, Hopkins, Rahman, Hamed, Morales, Vargas. 132 all-color pages.

THE RING 80TH ANNIVERSARY

As THE RING celebrates another milestone, the editors select the 80 best fighters of the last 80 years, in addition to the greatest fight in each of the 17 weight classes during THE RING years.

Yes, I would like to receive THE RING specials and have enclosed a check or money order for $7, payable to London Publishing Co., for each issue I am ordering (shipping and handling included).

- ☐ Famous Fights
- ☐ 75 Years Of The Ring
- ☐ Greats Of Yhe Game
- ☐ 80th Anniversary

SEND TO:

London Publishing Co. Box 910, Ft. Washington, PA 19034

Please indicate method of payment:

☐ Check or money order (enclosed and payable to London Publishing Co.)

☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard

Card #_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Expiration Date: ___/___ MO/YR

Signature:_____

Name_____

Address_____ Apt.____

City_____ State___ Zip_____

Prices apply in the U.S. only. All other countries please add $1.50 per magazine. International money orders in U.S. funds only. Please allow 6-8 weeks for delivery.

5935/09-02

New Face

(Continued from page 24)

acted the way I did after the fight."

When ref Pete Santiago waved the fight over at the 2:26 mark of the first round, the stunned crowd, dressed in tuxedoes and evening gowns, looked on as Mendoza jumped on every ringpost, shouting and screaming in Spanish, reacting as if he won the World Cup, Super Bowl, and World Series all in one afternoon.

Mendoza reaped $12,000 from the Olajide fight, a considerable chunk of change since Diamante was originally scheduled to receive $800 to fight journeyman Charles Whittaker in a non-televised prelim. The Olajide purse was the most money Mendoza had ever made in his life. Three days after the fight, Diamante left for Colombia to buy his first house, complete with bedroom doors, rugs on the floors, and an indoor stove for his wife and two children, a seven-year-old daughter and three-year-old son.

That's a big upgrade for someone who's lived in poverty most of his life.

Over the last three years, Mendoza has resided in Barranquilla, a city located on the northwest Colombian coast. It's much different from the small town of Valledupar, located in northeast Colombia on the border of Venezuela, where Mendoza grew up. It was a poor area, financially dependent on agriculture.

It's where Diamante's father, Jose Jesus Mendoza, would work the fields, when he could. Jose didn't want his sons to have his arduous life. So he envisioned his sons becoming the next Roberto Duran. But when Diamante's two older brothers failed miserably at boxing, unable to take the strain of being hit and lacking the commitment to train, Diamante stepped to the forefront.

Ironically, even though the Mendoza patriarch had originally wanted his sons to be boxers, Diamante's decision didn't sit too well with Jose Jesus at first. Epifanio first put on a pair of gloves when he was 12. An uncle involved in the transit system got the young Mendoza a job collecting bus fares. The money Mendoza earned was used to buy boxing equipment, without the full support of his father.

"My father always wanted to have a boxer in the family, he always talked to me about it, but it was like a soap opera," Mendoza recalled, laughing as he told the story. "My brothers were afraid to get into boxing. I felt I was going to be a great fighter, and my father didn't want to support me because he saw how my brothers had failed, so I went to my uncle, and he supported me. My father is alive and very proud of me today, though. My mother [Noris] doesn't want me to fight. She doesn't like it, but she supports me, too. She wants me to be a lawyer."

Mendoza may want to stick with boxing for a little longer. He helped himself greatly by accepting the Olajide fight on short notice, substituting for another Colombian slugger, Nicolas Cervera, who was prevented from flying to the U.S. because of visa trouble. No one knew anything about Mendoza, other than his pristine record and kayo rate. We still don't know much more after his dispensing of Olajide, except that the power he showed against unknown opposition in Colombia carried over against known opposition in America.

Both fighters assumed a feeling-out posture in the opening moments of the fight. Then, with a little less than a minute remaining in the round, Mendoza stepped to the shorter Olajide and landed a left hook over top of that lowered right hand he had seen on the videotapes. He followed with a right cross that landed flush. Olajide collapsed and, after seeming to regain his senses a couple of seconds later, tried getting up, only to fall back down again. Olajide, 17-1 (15), was unable to put pressure on his right foot, which two days later required surgery to repair a fracture/dislocation and torn ligaments.

"We weren't expecting what we saw," said Chris Middendorf, the matchmaker for Olajide's manager, Tommy Gallagher. "I had spoken to someone who had sparred with Epifanio in Florida. The descriptions were that Mendoza was strong, but raw. We came in the last week to try to get someone to take the fight, and this was after going through hundreds of names, and no one wanted to fight Olajide, especially after the Gary Jones fight (Olajide's highly impressive fifth-round kayo win two months earlier). We heard some certain things that made us feel good about Mendoza."

Olajide's people obviously didn't feel too good afterward, but Mendoza's people were elated. Sampson Lewkowicz, Men-

doza's promoter, was besieged with phone calls after the fight from promoters and fight managers all over the country, inquiring about his newly minted hot prospect. To Lewkowicz' credit, he didn't want to get too ahead of himself and start calling out Oscar De La Hoya and Winky Wright.

"I believe Olajide totally underestimated Diamante," Lewkowicz said. "Diamante never fought in the United States, but he proved he could fight. We haven't earned HBO or Showtime dates, and that's the way every manager should see it. Forget about the money, let's earn our position and prove ourselves."

There was talk after the Olajide win that Mendoza would take an even bigger step up and fight Bronco McKart in the near future. Another possibility was action fighter Kassim Ouma, who sparred with Mendoza in preparing for his fight with Darrell Woods on *Friday Night Fights* in early-October.

"When Diamante walked into the pre-fight meeting, I looked at him and I could see this was a trap fight for Olajide," said Joe Tessitore, ESPN's blow-by-blow announcer for the fight. "This guy was a hair short of 6'2" with a big upper body. I was surprised that Tokunbo looked a little stiff and stationary. You always look for a fight to fall into a certain pattern, but that fight didn't settle into anything.

"When we asked Tokunbo if he ever saw a tape of any of Mendoza's recent fights, he said, 'It's not about him; it's about me.' But I saw supreme confidence in Mendoza. He had a no-hesitation type of confidence, not staged confidence, like you see in a lot of fighters. To me, this is a real confident, hungry kid, who hasn't been bothered by the fact that he fought weak opposition in Colombia."

Still, it's hard to see where Mendoza is heading. His physical size is imposing for a junior middleweight, and there is no doubt he can crack, but can he fight past three rounds, which is the longest he's gone as a professional? Can Mendoza hurt the premier junior middleweights of the world?

One thing, however, is certain: Mendoza won't catch anybody by surprise again. Now, all the guys who were previously avoiding Olajide will be ducking Mendoza. ■

COLLECTOR'S

EXTRAVAGANZA!

The largest selling issue of KO MAGAZINE each year is the giant year-end issue. Since 1987, when these specials went to an expanded format, including four pages of color, they have been virtual newsstand sellouts. Now, you can order these issues by mail.

- KO Achievement Awards
- Predictions
- Results
- The Wacky, Weird, & Highly Unusual
- "Highly Unofficial Official Awards"

All This And Much, Much More In Each Special Year-End Issue!

ONLY $5 EACH ORDER YOURS TODAY!

Make check or money order payable to:
London Publishing Co.
Box 910
Ft. Washington, PA 19034

KO
The Knockout Boxing Magazine

Please rush me the magazines I have checked.
I enclose $5 for each one I am ordering.

- ☐ March 1987
- ☐ March 1988
- ☐ April 1989
- ☐ April 1990
- ☐ March 1991
- ☐ April 1992
- ☐ April 1993
- ☐ April 1994
- ☐ April 1995
- ☐ April 1996
- ☐ April 1998
- ☐ April 1999
- ☐ April 2000

Name _____

Address _____

Apt. _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Price offer applies to U.S. only. All other countries $7. Int'l money order in U.S. funds only.
Please allow 6–8 weeks for delivery.

5911/03-02

SUMMARY

HEAVYWEIGHTS

Lance Whitaker KO 5 Cliff Couser
Lawrence Clay-Bey KO 2 Sedreck Fields
Joe Mesi KO 9 David Izon
Henry Akinwande KO 7 Sam Ubokane
Charles Shufford W 12 Eliecer Castillo
Nicolay Valuev KO 4 Konstantin Prizuk
Cedric Boswell KO 2 Talmadge Griffis
Taurus Sykes W 10 Sherman Williams
Marcelo Dominguez W 10 Fabio Moli
Duncan Dokiwari KO 1 Tali Kulihaapai
Dale Crowe KO 1 Tyrone Muex
Sinan Samil San KO 7 Przemyslaw Saleta
Kevin McBride KO 3 Craig Tomlinson
Jo-El Scott KO 4 Jason Gethers
Pele Reid KO 3 Joseph Chingangu
Ron Guerrero Tech. Draw 2 Jason Nicholson
Russell Chasteen W 12 Troy Weida
Anthony Thompson KO 7 Zuri Lawrence
Charles Wilson Tech. Win 5 Javier Mora
Mike Rodgers KO 2 Art Jimmerson
Chauncy Welliver W 8 King Ipitan
John Poore KO 2 Mashaka Malulu
Brandon Sheffield KO 1 Brian Aro
Rafael Pedro W 6 John Dixon
Rob Calloway W 6 Jason Nicholson
Dominick Guinn W 8 Garing Lane
Malik Scott W 8 Ken Murphy
Michael Simms KO 2 Wesley Martin
Sultan Ibragimov KO 1 Leon Hollis
Malcolm Tann KO 1 Jack Beard

CRUISERWEIGHTS

Wayne Braithwaite KO 10
Vincenzo Cantatore
(Wins Vacant WBC Title)
Derrick Harmon KO 2 Tim Littles
Sebastiaan Rothmann KO 5
Anthony Bigeni
Jesper Kristiansen KO 8 Earl Morais
Frederic Serrat W 8 Joe Siluvangi

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS

Montell Griffin W 12 George Jones
Julio Gonzalez KO 3 Thomas Reid

Super middle prospect Chad Dawson fires a stiff jab at John Williams

Thomas Ulrich KO 2 Yawe Davis
Tony Oakey W 12 Andrei Kiarsten
Jimmy Crawford W 10 Larry Kenney
Danny Batchelder W 10 David Lopez
Arturo Rivera KO 1 Gustavo Enriquez

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Mads Larsen KO 2 Rogerio Cacciatore
Anthony Mundine KO 11
Ricky Thornberry
Juergen Braehmer W 12
Omar Eduardo Gonzalez
Freeman Barr W 8 Robert Davis
Mario Veit W 8 Ramdane Serdjane
Yoshinori Nishizawa W 12 Marc Bargero
Andre Thysse W 12 Christopher Buthelezi
Henry Porras W 10 Walter Palacios
Stefan Pryor W 6 Larry Kenney
Chad Dawson KO 4 John Williams
Chris Cruz KO 1 Emilio Garcia

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

William Joppy KO 10 Naotaka Hozumi
(Retains WBA Title)
Howard Eastman KO 1 Charden Ansoula
Hassine Cherifi W 10 Christophe Tendil
Epifanio Mendoza KO 1 Tokunbo Olajide
Kirino Garcia W 10 David Mendez
Sam Soliman W 12 Sakio Bika
Cristian Sanavia W 6 Didier Mupeko
Eric Regan W 10 Pedro Ortega
Jesse Brinkley KO 3 Miguel Ruiz
Sechew Powell W 4 Jonathan Taylor

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Michael Rask W 12 Alfonso Mosquera
Tony Marshall W 10 Benji Singleton
Shannan Taylor KO 1 Mamurat Ali
Carlos Bojorquez KO 4 Ron Weaver
Nader Hamdan W 8 Armand Ajadato
Travis Sims KO 8 Anton Robinson
Matt Vanda W 10 Jesus Valverde
Simone Rotolo KO 4 Danny Thiele
Paul Williams W 6 Joshua Onyango
Brad Thompson KO 3 Antonio Adams

WELTERWEIGHTS

Antonio Margarito W 12 Danny Perez
Cesar Bazan KO 4 Joshua Smith
Carlos Baldomir W 8 David Ojeda
Neil Sinclair KO 2 Paul Knights
Ricardo Williams W 10 Terronn Millett
Antonio Lauri D 10 Fabrice Colombel
Chucky Tschorniawsky W 10 Ivan Robinson
Hiroshi Watanabe W 12 Rev Santillan
Sonny Rambing W 12 Carlito Brosas
Henry Bruseles W 8 Wilmer Mejia
Francisco Bojado W 8 Frankie Sanchez
Kelson Pinto KO 10 Arturo Reyes
Sumya Anani KO 5 Lisa Holewyne

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS

Vivian Harris KO 2 Diobelys Hurtado
(Wins WBA Title)
Randall Bailey KO 1 Alfonzo Fowler
Junior Witter KO 2 Lucky Sambo
Juan Carlos Rubio W 8
Alejandro Jimenez
Steve Quinonez W 8 Lovemore Ndou
Dagoberto Najera W 12
Rogelio Castaneda
Martin O'Malley W 10 Danny Rios
Fred Cadena W 8 Mambea Bakari
Oscar Diaz KO 5 Omar Davila
Chikashi Inada KO 5 Leobardo Roman
Paul Malignaggi W 6 Chad Lawshe

LIGHTWEIGHTS

Leavander Johnson W 12 Julian Wheeler
Javier Jauregui W 12 Alex Trujillo
Goyo Vargas KO 5 Cristopher Saluday
Billy Irwin KO 9 Vincent Howard
Michael Clark W 10 Gary Balletto
Edelmiro Martinez W 10 Roque Cassiani
Jason Cook KO 5 Nasser Lakrib
Bobby Vanzie W 8 Andrey Devyatakin
Laszlo Herczeg KO 4 Michele Delli Paoli
Dainoshin Kuma W 10
Muangfalek Kiatwichien
Daudy Bahari W 10 Thongdang Vorapin
Graham Earl W 10 Chill John
Juan Diaz KO 6 Roy Delgado
Cristian Bejarano W 6 Juan Raul Llopis

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS

Sirimongkol Singmanassak KO 2
Richard Cabillo
Cassius Baloyi KO 11 Mbulelo Botile
Jorge Barrios Tech. Win 6 Carlos Rios
Arnulfo Castillo D 10 Arturo Urena
Wilfredo Vazquez KO 2 Eddie Saenz
Rocky Juarez W 10
Hector Acero-Sanchez
Affif Djelti W 12 Bouzane Oudji
Alex Arthur KO 4 Steve Conway
Jose Reyes W 8 Rogers Mtagwa
Jesus Vega W 4 Julio Cesar Ruiz

FEATHERWEIGHTS

Marco Antonio Barrera W 12
Johnny Tapia
(Retains World Title)
Scott Harrison W 12 Julio Pablo Chacon
William Abelyan W 10 Armando Cordoba
Wayne McCullough KO 4
Nikolai Eremeev
Juan Carlos Ramirez W 10 Cesar Soto
Angel Chacon W 12
John Michael Johnson
Zahir Raheem KO 8 Luisito Espinosa
Bobby Boy Velardez W 10
Manuel Sepeda
Kozo Ishii W 10 Wichit Chuwatana
Chris John W 10 Ratanachai Vorapin
Nedal Hussein W 10 Jackson Asiku
Takalani Ndlovu W 12 Edward Mpofu
Takashi Koshimoto W 12 Jeffrey Onate
David Murillo W Disq. 2 Jose Luis Tula

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

Manny Pacquiao KO 1
Fabbrakob Rakkiatgym
(Retains IBF Title)
Oscar Larios KO 1 Willie Jorrin
(Wins WBC Title)
Salim Medjkoune W 12 Osamu Sato
(Wins WBA Title)
Akihiko Nago KO 2 Sakmongkol
Singmanasak
David Donis W 12 Phillip Payne
Napapol Kiatisakchokchai KO 3
Samusolo Izac Beyi
Shigeru Nakazato KO 7 Virgo Warou
Hozumi Hasegawa W 10
Ryuichi Minoriyama

BANTAMWEIGHTS

Veerapol Sahaprom KO 6 Alex Escaner
(Non-Title Bout)
Oscar Andrade W 10 Heriberto Ruiz
Sasha Baktin KO 2 San Sithnaruepol

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS

Masayuki Arinaga KO 9 Takuya Kiya
Brahim Asloum KO 4
Saengsak Singmanasak

FLYWEIGHTS

Eric Morel KO 11 Denkaosaen Kaowichit
(Retains WBA Title)
Hussein Hussein KO 4 Panca Saliban
Vic Darchinyan KO 4 Hamdani Tomagola

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS

Katsunari Takuyama W 8
Songkram Porpaoin

STRAWWEIGHTS

Jose Antonio Aguirre W 12 Juan Palacios
(Retains WBC Title)
Khulile Makeba KO 1 Mzikayise Foslara
Juan Alfonso Keb W 10 Paulino Villalobos

BOXING EQUIPMENT
EVERLAST
EST.1910
BRONX, NEW YORK

PRESENTS

The RING

FIGHTER of the MONTH

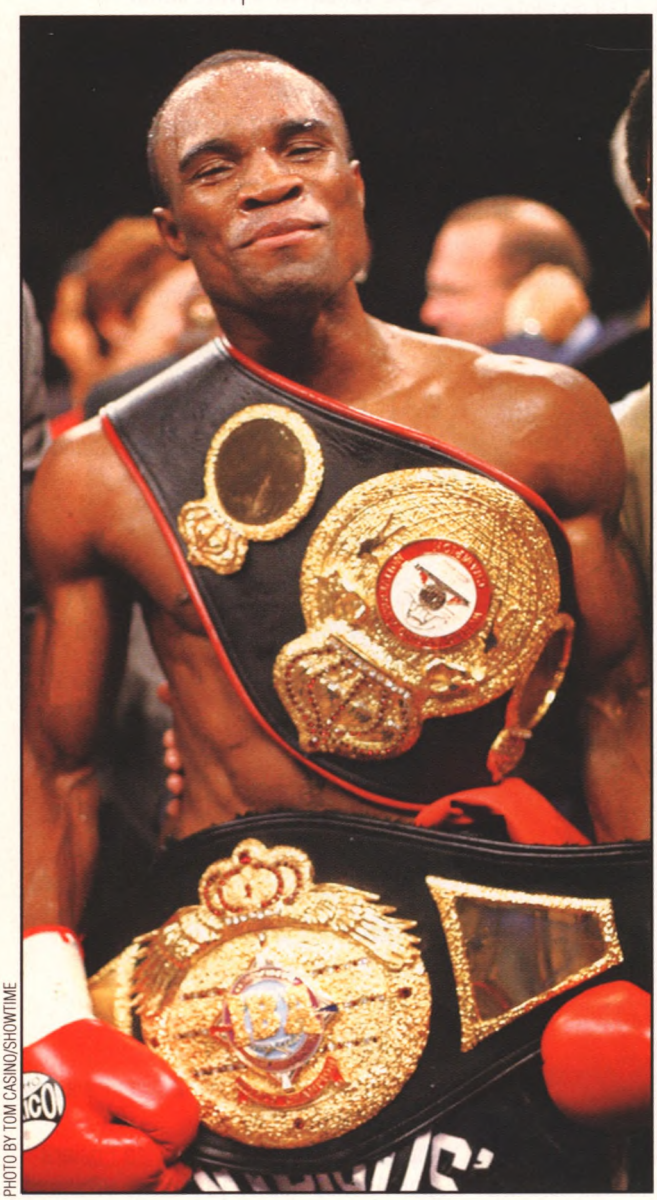


PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Fight people knew Vivian Harris was a live dog going into his bout with WBA 140-pound titleholder Diobelys Hurtado, but few expected him to blow away the Cuban expatriate in such an expedient and startling fashion. After all, in his last fight, Hurtado had withstood the best shots of murderous punching Randall Bailey and rallied back to win by knockout. He'd also had junior welterweight champion Kostya Tszyu and future Hall of Famer Pernell Whitaker on the deck before succumbing. Only the very best had beaten Hurtado.

Conversely, the biggest names Harris had been in with were Ray Oliveira and Ivan Robinson; he'd lost to the former and drawn with the latter. At the very best, his fight with Hurtado was a tossup. Until the bell rang, that is.

Both Harris and Hurtado are nimble stylists with limber legs, fast hands, and the kind of power that emanates from speed, rather than strength. But Hurtado's chin, the chink in his armor that betrayed him against both Whitaker and Tszyu, let him down again.

After rattling Hurtado in the first round, Harris exploded with a left-right to the chin early in the second that dropped Hurtado along the ropes. The beltholder regained his feet, but looked unsteady, and when referee Laurence Cole motioned him to take a step forward, Hurtado's legs almost crumbled beneath him, forcing an immediate stoppage.

Harris' upset victory was enough to earn him Fighter of the Month honors, and if he turns out to be anywhere near as good as the other two fighters who have turned out Hurtado's lights, further accolades surely await.

Vivian Harris

RINGSIDE REPORTS

Eric Morel KO 11 Denkaosaen Kaowichit

Anaheim, California: Billed as a co-feature with the welterweight fight between Antonio Margarito and Danny Perez, these two little guys stole the show. As is often the case with Thai fighters, no one knew anything about Kaowichit. But Morel, an extremely adept mover who represented the U.S. in the 1996 Olympics, had seen a tape, and he knew he was in for a fight. The Thai, who came in at 20-0 (8), looked strong and cut.

Both fighters came out hard and fast. Morel's attention was earned when Kaowichit, 111½, broke his nose in the first round. The Thai edged Morel, 112, Madison, Wisconsin, in the next round. But after that, the much faster Morel, who improved to 32-0 (18) by making his fourth successful defense of the WBA flyweight belt, gradually wore him down with quickness, intelligence, superior footwork, and devoted bodywork.

But Kaowichit was definitely in the fight for all the early rounds. In round three, Morel, 27, waded inside with vicious shots, and Kaowichit, 26, stood his ground, firing back. Morel got the best of it, but mano-a-mano exchanges were the Thai's only hope, and he knew it. He smiled and motioned for Morel to try it again. At that moment, the largely Hispanic crowd fell in love with their Thai guy. He didn't speak Spanish or English, but he spoke their language.

As the fight gradually took its toll, Kaowichit's punches got wider, weaker, and sloppier. Morel fired increasingly accurate, straight shots. Finally, in round 11, the game Kaowichit went down from a combination. He got up and tried again, got hit some more, and sank to his knees. Referee Raul Caiz (USA) wisely waved it off at the 1:40 mark.

"He was too fast for me," the challenger said afterward. "I couldn't handle his speed."

Morel may well be the best flyweight in the world. But where does he go from here? He wants the seemingly retired Ricardo Lopez. But even if he gets him, what does Morel do after that? Possibly he will move up, or possibly some gleaming opponent will emerge and Morel and the new guy will earn as much as Michael Carbajal and Chiquita Gonzalez did in the good old days. But don't count on it.

Promoter Bob Arum was looking for a crowd of 5,000 for the show at the Arrowhead Pond, but, as he complained later, "the f___in' Yankees lost to the Angels," so the Angels were playing down the street for the American League pennant. That brought the crowd down to about 3,100.

Television: Showtime
Promoter: Top Rank
(10-14-02)
Ivan Goldman

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Morel attacks Kaowichit along the ropes

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Margarito outclasses challenger Perez

Antonio Margarito W 12 Danny Perez

Anaheim, California: Mexican welterweight Margarito was effective but unspectacular in his first defense of the WBO belt he won with an impressive 10th-round stoppage of Antonio Diaz in March. This was a rematch. Margarito held a narrow victory over Perez in an eight-rounder two years earlier. In that fight, Margarito tasted canvas in round one, but came through with a hard-fought split decision.

Perez was an aggressive, fierce competitor from 100 miles up the coast in Ventura, California, but everything Perez, 145½, could do, Margarito, 146½, did better. Perez never stopped trying, but the Mexican beat him to the punch time after time. The first round was close, but it didn't take long for Margarito to take over, with each round an echo of the one earlier.

In round two, Margarito, 24, landed a nasty right hand. The impact seemed to echo around the Arrowhead Pond. But tough Perez, 25, stayed on his feet and shook his head up and down, as if to say, "You got me."

Perhaps still recovering, the game Perez backed up some in round three. By round six he was taking useless punishment, trying and failing over and over.

"He outhustled me," Perez, 27-3 (17), said later. "He was busier. My plan was to just outbox him, but it didn't work. He's a great champion."

Said Margarito: "All he had was a right hand. I knew he was strong and tough, but I just followed the fight plan."

Judges Lou Moret (USA) and Jose Cobian (USA) had it 120-108. Pat Russell (USA) scored rounds one and 12 for Perez, making his score 118-110.

Margarito, 27-3 (18) with 1 no-contest, looked solid enough to make the welterweight division start to look really interesting. But Shane Mosley is heading toward bigger paydays at 154 pounds, and champion Vernon Forrest will probably be following soon. Still, if Ricardo Mayorga, Andrew "Six Heads" Lewis, Diaz, and Cory Spinks hang around, the welterweight division will hold some intriguing matchup possibilities.

Television: Showtime
Promoter: Top Rank
(10-14-02)
Ivan Goldman

Vivian Harris KO 2 Diobelys Hurtado

Houston, Texas: Harris dethroned WBA super lightweight titlist Hurtado with a stunning second-round stoppage in front of a crowd of 2,125 at Reliant Park. It was a surprisingly easy outing for Harris, a slight underdog, considering how impressive Hurtado looked in his title-winning seventh-round knockout over Randall Bailey in May.

An all-out brawl that broke out between the two camps during the glove selection proceedings the previous day lasted longer than the bout itself. In an apparent attempt to psych Harris out, Hurtado spat in Harris' face while the WBA representatives and

the Texas commissioners were briefing the fighters. Punches and curses were exchanged and chairs were hurled in the ensuing fracas before order was finally restored.

Despite lacking Hurtado's big-fight experience and being subjected to his saliva-squirting mind games, Harris entered the ring the more relaxed and focused of the two. Hurtado, on the other hand, appeared jittery and awkward from the outset. The Miami-based Cuban seemed devoid of any rhythm or timing as he began the fight circling the ring while shooting out left jabs to gauge his opponent's mettle.

He was still fighting in feeling-out mode when, midway through the round, Harris, 139, stepped in and detonated a crisp, compact left hook to the head that momentarily froze the defending titlist in his tracks. Seconds before the round ended, Harris connected with a well-timed counter left hook to the jaw that visibly rocked Hurtado, 139½, and sent him back to his corner with a troubled look on his face.

It didn't take long for Harris to find his mark again in the second round. Despite his vast experience as an amateur (241 fights) and as a pro, Hurtado committed one of the most basic sins in boxing by retreating straight back against an advancing foe. Hurtado, 30, paid heavily for his faux pas as Harris, 24, instinctively closed the distance and unleashed a left hook-straight right combination that felled the Cuban defector against the ropes.

Hurtado, 35-3-1 (23), made it to his feet at the count of six, but wobbled unsteadily when referee Laurence Cole (USA) motioned him to step forward, prompting the stoppage at 0:46 of the round. It was then Harris' turn to hit the canvas as he dropped face first in jubilation and pounded the ring with his fists like a toddler throwing a temper tantrum.

"I led with the right hand, landed the left hook and then the right hand. He was open for it," Harris said, describing the fight-ending punch sequence. "He's a good fighter, but he has only one way of fighting, and that's going left. Once you cut him off and make him go right, that's it."

In victory, Harris, 22-1-1 (16), moved himself into the spotlight of the red-hot junior welterweight picture, where Kostya Tszyu reigns supreme as the true champion (and as the WBA's "super champion"—their excuse for squeezing sanctioning fees out of Harris and Hurtado). He is eager to secure a fight with England's Ricky Hatton, against whom he seems to harbor a personal grudge. Harris also entertained the possibility of a rematch with Hurtado.

"I'll give him a rematch," Harris said. "I'm happy that he gave me a chance to fight for the title when I wasn't even [ranked] number one. Just tell him don't spit again."

Television: Showtime

Promoters: Main Events, SRL Boxing, Lestor Bedford

(10-19-02)

Peter Lim

PHOTO BY TOM CASINO/SHOWTIME

Harris' hook sets up the right-hand finisher

PHOTO BY SUMIO YAMADA

Joppy hurts Hozumi to the body

William Joppy KO 10 Naotaka Hozumi

Tokyo, Japan: Fast-moving Joppy, 159¾, Washington, D.C., easily retained his bogus middleweight belt as he kept moving side-to-side and battered the game but relatively inexperienced Hozumi, 160, Japan, halting him at 2:48 of the 10th round at Ryogoku Sumo Arena. It was Joppy's first defense of the WBA crown that he had lost to Felix Trinidad, then regained by outpointing Howard Eastman after the real middleweight champ, Bernard Hopkins, was elevated to the ridiculous "super champion" status.

It was a monotonously lopsided affair, as the fleet-footed Joppy, 32, kept penetrating the peek-a-boo guard of Hozumi, 27, with jabs and right hands, while the challenger did nothing but occasionally throw punches to the side of the belly. Joppy swept all of the rounds with his superior speed and skills, while Hozumi, 21-3-1 (18), made one futile attempt after another to pin him to the ropes. In the 10th, Joppy exploded with solid overhand rights that almost toppled the taller Hozumi, and British referee John Coyle wisely called a halt even though there were no knockdowns. It was an easy payday for Joppy, 34-2-1 (25), as expected.

(10-10-02)

Joe Koizumi

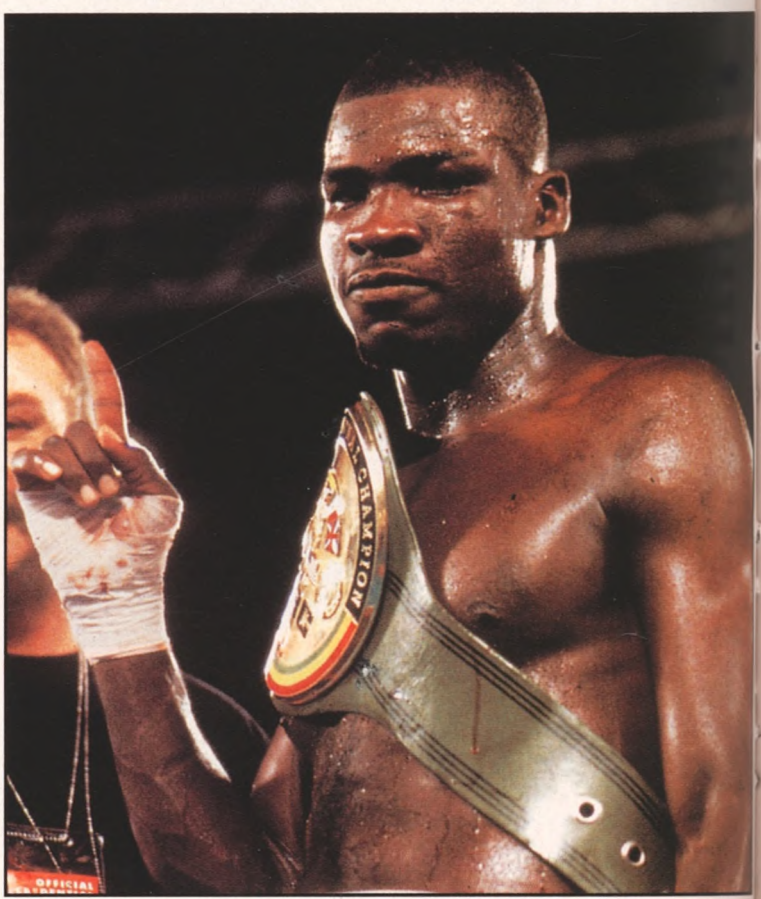
Wayne Braithwaite KO 10 Vincenzo Cantatore

Como, Italy: With fatigue setting in and a hostile environment making his task more difficult, Braithwaite, 186, Brooklyn, New York, via Guyana, found the opening in round 10 to finish Cantatore, 190, Italy, and win the vacant WBC cruiserweight belt at the Casino Campione d'Italia near Lake Como in the Italian Alps. Germany-based Cuban Juan Carlos Gomez gave up the title to pursue honors at heavyweight, forcing top contender Braithwaite to wait for his chance. It proved to be worth it.

Dirty tricks were alleged by the camp of the 27-year-old Braithwaite, starting when he was forced to stay 90 miles from the fight venue in Lecco. There was also dispute about the Italian's weight. He came in at the cruiserweight limit of 190 pounds at the official weigh-in, but by fight night was rumored to be as high as 220. And to top it all off, despite it being a dinner show that usually attracts respectable crowds, Braithwaite encountered serious abuse from the Italian fans who chucked what they had left on their dinner plates at him after he won.

"If we hadn't had guards there, me and my team would have ended up hurt," Braithwaite declared.

That did not happen, nor did it happen much during the first eight rounds of action, Cantatore confused and frustrated for the most part by Braithwaite's southpaw stance and evasive maneuvers, which frequently made the Italian appear clumsy as he lunged in and missed. Meanwhile, Braithwaite hammered home accurate jabs and bodyshots, Cantatore complaining all the while to referee Guadalupe Garcia (Mexico) about virtually every punch his opponent threw, never



Braithwaite escaped Italy with a cruiserweight belt

mind that they all appeared perfectly legal. The only knockdown of the fight came in the fifth, when the 31-year-old Cantatore, slightly off-balance, was floored by a straight right.

But Braithwaite, 18-0 (15), did not have it all his own way. Indeed, after the halfway point, Cantatore, 27-3 (26), began to have some success on the inside, and by the ninth, the Guyanese fighter had lost all of his prior zest. It seemed he might lose the fight, too, as he spent nearly the entire round holding and eventually had a point deducted for it.

A swelling came up around Braithwaite's left eye by the start of the 10th, but he recovered and finished matters shortly thereafter. A couple of left hooks stunned the Italian and had him leaning over the ropes with his back to his opponent. Braithwaite legally reached around and clocked Cantatore with a right to the face, prompting yet another complaint from the home fighter, who seemed to think he merited special privileges. But Garcia, after giving in to much of the Italian's whining all night, finally took a stand and ordered Cantatore to fight. Yet Cantatore continued to look at the ref, giving Braithwaite the opportunity to pop him with a jarring right-left, forcing Garcia's intervention.

"If I didn't know him out, I felt I would have lost," said Braithwaite. "It's very hard for a fighter to come from America or another part of the world to win a title in Europe. I think if they had robbed me, I would have started a riot in Italy all by myself."

Television: ESPN2

(10-11-02)

Brian Doogan

Salim Medjkoune W 12 Osamu Sato

Tokyo, Japan: Slick-punching southpaw Medjkoune, 122, captured the WBA 122-pound belt as he kept incessantly moving around and scoring with light but accurate combinations to defeat defending titlist Sato, 122, over 12 heats. Medjkoune withstood Sato's retaliation in the later rounds and captured a unanimous decision. Judge Silvestre Abainza (Philippines) scored it 116-112, Philippe Verbeke (Belgium) had it 117-111, and Rodolfo Maldonado (Panama) saw it 119-110, all for the clever Frenchman.

Medjkoune, five years older than the Japanese titlist at age 30, started circling and throwing busy combinations to the nervous and stiff Sato from the outset. Sato, making his first defense of the belt, couldn't catch the fast footworker in the first four rounds, as all of his aggressive attempts to cut off the ring were in vain. Though Sato was beginning to do well with bodyshots in the sixth, he hit the deck from a straight left from Medjkoune at the end of the round. Referee Guillermo Perez Pineda (Panama) called it a slip, but the punch caused the champ considerable damage and it looked like a knockdown.

Sato, 26-2-2 (15), whose nostrils and lip were badly bloodied by Medjkoune's busy combos, desperately accelerated his attack from the ninth onward, but the French lefty's occasional counters kept him honest. Medjkoune, 40-3-1 (21), then dominated the final session to confirm his victory.

Promoter: Kyoei Promotions

(10-9-02)

Joe Koizumi

PHOTO BY SUMIO YAMADA

Medjkoune (left) makes Sato's title reign a short one

Scott Harrison W 12 Julio Pablo Chacon

Glasgow, Scotland: Assertive, aggressive, and always in control, Harrison, 126, Glasgow, Scotland, announced himself on the world stage as a serious player in the featherweight division with a clear points victory over Chacon, 126, Buenos Aires, Argentina, before almost 5,000 of his supporters at the Braehead Arena.

At the end of the night Harrison picked up the WBO belt once held by Naseem Hamed, now in hiding following the chastening experience he suffered at the hands of Marco Antonio Barrera and an unimpressive comeback win on points against limited Spaniard Manuel Calvo. The 25-year-old Scot is regarded by many as Britain's best featherweight now, but he is sure to encounter a real fight for that distinction if a proposed showdown with Northern Ireland's Wayne McCullough comes off next year. He can reckon too on having far more to deal with against "The Pocket Rocket" than Chacon was able to confront him with.

Perhaps Chacon, 44-3 (31), was put off his usual game by Harrison's strength and productive pugnacity and the potency contained in the Glaswegian's left hook. Strangely for a fighter renowned for his ruggedness, Chacon retaliated seemingly without conviction, limiting his assault mainly to jabbing, with few right hands or combinations thrown.

Hard jabs jolted the defending titlist, and two-fisted attacks to his head and body had the visitor covering up and looking out, it seemed, for a quick route back across the Atlantic. A solid right in the fourth and further punishment to his body and his head increased his anxiety, as did the volume being generated by the partisan gathering. Harrison was in control, and Chacon was finding it virtually impossible to make any inroads,

PHOTO BY JOHN GICHIGI/GETTY IMAGES

Harrison's busy hands dictate against Chacon

a jarring punch forcing the gumshield out of his mouth and prompting another pounding by the hometown man.

Chacon did rally in the seventh and eighth, finding the range with his left hook, but it was a brief period of success. With blood leaking from a cut above his right eye, he was sent home thoroughly disappointed as Harrison, 18-1-1 (9), overcame the tiredness he was feeling to maintain control of the final few rounds and seal a unanimous decision.

Judges Manuel Olivera (Spain) and Axel Zielke (Germany) scored it 117-111, and Dave Parris (England) had it 117-112, the same as THE RING. The referee was Samuel Viruet (USA).

"Right now I am the best featherweight in Britain," said the victor. "This win has put me firmly on the world stage, and the fights I need now are against Marco Antonio Barrera and Erik Morales, no doubt."

But McCullough, at ringside to provide analysis for British broadcaster Sky, announced he would look forward to disputing Harrison's claims if promoter Frank Warren pitches the two together in the new year.

"I saw him do a lot of good things in the fight, but I saw him do a lot that I would be able to take advantage of as well," said McCullough. "Scott's a good fighter, but I've mixed in a higher class throughout my career. He's only about to enter that class now and he may find there's a bit of a difference."

Promoter: Sports Network

(10-19-02)

Brian Doogan

Manny Pacquiao KO 1 Fabbrakob Rakkiatgym

Davao, Philippines: Over the last year-and-a-half, boxing fans around the world have been standing up and taking notice of the fiery punching power of southpaw IBF junior featherweight titlist Pacquiao, most noticeably his devastating straight left. Now you can add a TNT-laden right fist to the arsenal of the young and brash Filipino.

Pacquiao picked the southern Philippine city of Davao, about two hours from his native province, to make his third title defense and to unveil his newfound weapon, flooring hapless Thai challenger Rakkiatgym with a short, pulverizing right hook midway through the first round. Rakkiatgym got up, but never recovered. He went down three more times before referee Bruce McTavish (New Zealand) waved off the contest. Rakkiatgym had to be carried out on a stretcher and spent the night in the hospital before being released.

Afterward, Pacquiao, 35-2-1 (27), said he had added the right hook to his menu of heavy leather during his latest six-week stint under the tutelage of trainer Freddie Roach in Hollywood, California. He said Roach had him working on the punch day in and day out and that he was anxious to showcase it in front of his home fans at the Rizal Memorial College gymnasium.

Those fans and the tens of millions of Pacquiao lovers watching around the Philippines were expecting a little more out of the Thai challenger. He hadn't lost in 30 straight fights dating back to 1993. Several boxing observers in Asia knew him as an extremely intelligent fighter who would try to avoid trading blows with the hard-hitting Pacquiao.

But Rakkiatgym, 35-3 (22), had to lose five pounds on the eve of the fight just to make the 122-pound limit (he actually came in at 121, ultimately), and when the bell sounded for the first round, he looked extremely flat-footed. Pacquiao, 122, typically stalked him from the beginning, with the 27-year-old Thai looking none too confident. Midway through the round, Pacquiao, 23, landed a straight left that seemed to catch the attention of the challenger and sent him backpedaling across the ring. Pacquiao caught up with him, squared up, and fired a perfect right hook that sent Rakkiatgym down in a heap.

The excitable Pacquiao thrives in just these kinds of situations and he went in for the finish after Rakkiatgym rose. Another barrage culminated in a beautiful uppercut that dropped the Thai for the second time. He rose and indicated he wanted to continue. Several seconds later, a blow to the chest sent him down on one knee. He wanted another chance, but this time Pacquiao finished where he started, catching his retreating opponent with another beautiful right hook. McTavish called a halt at 2:46 of the round, before Rakkiatgym even hit the canvas.

Promoter: Fortstone Promotions

(10-26-02)

Ted Lerner

International Boxing Hall of Fame

Madison County Tourism 1-800-684-7320

I ♥ NY

Limited Autograph Souvenirs

Boxing Greats Helping Support the Museum

Letter of Authenticity accompanies each item

EVERLAST SPEED BAG

$195

Autographed by 25 "Greats"

Arguello ★ Basilio ★ Benvenuti ★ Brown ★ Buchanan ★ Cooper ★ Cuevas ★ Ellis ★ Fenech ★ Fullmer ★ Griffith ★ Hagler ★ LaPorte ★ Leija ★ Lyle ★ Napoles ★ Norris ★ Norton ★ Olivares ★ Ortiz ★ Pryor ★ Shavers ★ Starling ★ Ward ★ Leon Spinks ★

GIANT GOLD GLOVE

$225

Autographed by 25 "Greats"

Arguello ★ Basilio ★ Benvenuti ★ Brown ★ Buchanan ★ Cooper ★ Cuevas ★ Ellis ★ Fenech ★ Fullmer ★ Griffith ★ Hagler ★ LaPorte ★ Leija ★ Lyle ★ Napoles ★ Norris ★ Norton ★ Olivares ★ Ortiz ★ Pryor ★ Shavers ★ Starling ★ Ward ★ Leon Spinks ★

BENVENUTI & GRIFFITH

Both champions on Everlast glove or speed bag

$95

★ Limited Quantity ★

ARGUELLO & PRYOR

Both champions on Everlast glove or trunks

$95

★ Limited Quantity ★

AUTOGRAPH GLOVES

$85

(single autograph on Everlast glove)

★ Earnie Shavers
★ Carmen Basilio
★ Leon Spinks
★ Michael Spinks
★ Aaron Pryor
★ Christy Martin
★ Willie Pep
★ Ken Norton
★ Virgil Hill
★ Kid Gavilan
★ Ken Buchanan
★ Danny "Little Red" Lopez
★ Angel Manfredy
★ Terry Norris
★ Jeff Fenech
★ Pipino Cuevas
★ Jose Napoles
★ Nino Benvenuti
★ "Irish" Micky Ward
★ Paulie Ayala

COMBINATION GLOVE

(two autographs on Everlast glove)

$95

★ Basilio - Saxton
★ Basilio - Fullmer
★ Michael & Leon Spinks
★ Basilio - DeMarco

COMBINATION SPEED BAGS

★ Mexican Boxing Greats ★
Olivares, Cuevas & Napoles on one speed bag

$95

★ Boxing Stars ★
Benvenuti, Leon Spinks Cooper, Norton & Gavilan on one speed bag

CHAMPIONSHIP GLOVE

All 25 autographs on red Everlast glove

$195

Arguello ★ Basilio ★ Benvenuti ★ Brown ★ Buchanan ★ Cooper ★ Cuevas ★ Ellis ★ Fenech ★ Fullmer ★ Griffith ★ Hagler ★ LaPorte ★ Leija ★ Lyle ★ Napoles ★ Norris ★ Norton ★ Olivares ★ Ortiz ★ Pryor ★ Shavers ★ Starling ★ Ward ★ Leon Spinks ★

EVERLAST CORNER POST

$235

Autographed by 25 greats:

Arguello ★ Basilio ★ Benvenuti ★ Brown ★ Buchanan ★ Cooper ★ Cuevas ★ Ellis ★ Fenech ★ Fullmer ★ Griffith ★ Hagler ★ LaPorte ★ Leija ★ Lyle ★ Napoles ★ Norris ★ Norton ★ Olivares ★ Ortiz ★ Pryor ★ Shavers ★ Starling ★ Ward ★ Leon Spinks ★

BOXING ROBE

All autographs on Everlast robe

$235

Arguello ★ Basilio ★ Benvenuti ★ Brown ★ Buchanan ★ Cooper ★ Cuevas ★ Ellis ★ Fenech ★ Fullmer ★ Griffith ★ Hagler ★ LaPorte ★ Leija ★ Lyle ★ Norris ★ Norton ★ Olivares ★ Ortiz ★ Pryor ★ Shavers ★ Starling ★ Ward ★ Leon Spinks

MARVELOUS MARVIN HAGLER

★ Hall of Fame Champion on Everlast glove ★

$85

Hagler

★ Limited Quantity ★

SIR HENRY COOPER

$85 per item

★ Trunks
★ Glove
★ Speed Bag

Phone Orders: (315) 697-7095
Fax (315) 697-5356

Make checks payable to:
BOXING HALL OF FAME
1 Hall of Fame Drive
Canastota, NY 13032

Please add 7% Sales Tax and $8.00 per item for shipping in U.S.
Call for International shipping rates

ALPHABET RATINGS

The Rankings of Boxing's Three International Governing Bodies

WBA RATINGS

(Ratings as of August 2002)

HEAVYWEIGHTS

Champ: John Ruiz (USA)

1. Evander Holyfield (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Vitaly Klitschko (UKR)
4. David Tua (NZ)
5. Hasim Rahman (USA)
6. Mike Tyson (USA)
7. Jameel McCline (USA)
8. Kirk Johnson (CAN)
9. Fres Oquendo (PR)
10. Larry Donald (USA)
11. Nicolay Valouev (RUS)
12. Faruq Saleem (USA)

CRUISERWEIGHTS

Champ: Jean Marc Mormeck (FRA)

1. Alexander Gurov (UKR)
2. James Toney (USA)
3. Wayne Braithwaite (GUY)
4. Virgil Hill (USA)
5. O'Neil Bell (USA)
6. Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)
7. Vincenzo Cantatore (ITA)
8. Luis Pineda (PAN)
9. Valery Brudov (RUS)
10. Daniel Rowsell (AUSTRL)
11. Ravea Springs (USA)
12. Louis Azille (GUY)

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS

Unified Champ: Roy Jones (USA)
Champ: Bruno Girard (FRA)

1. Antonio Tarver (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Lou Del Valle (USA)
4. David Telesco (USA)
5. Mads Larsen (DEN)
6. Reggie Johnson (USA)
7. Julio Gonzalez (USA)
8. Manuel Siaca (PR)
9. Montell Griffin (USA)
10. Rocky Torres (USA)
11. Thomas Hansvoll (NOR)
12. Rodney Moore (USA)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Champ: Byron Mitchell (USA)

1. Mehdi Sahnoune (FRA)
2. Antwun Echols (USA)
3. David Starie (GB)
4. Andrei Shkalikov (RUS)
5. Mikkel Kessler (DEN)
6. Danilo Haussler (GER)
7. Thomas Tate (USA)
8. Markus Beyer (GER)
9. Anthony Mundine (AUSTRL)
10. Rick Thornberry (AUSTRL)
11. Zafarou Ballogou (TOG)
12. Nordin Ben Salah (NETH)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Unified Champ: Bernard Hopkins (USA)
Champ: William Joppy (USA)

1. Vacant
2. Bert Schenk (GER)
3. Antonio Perugino (ITA)
4. Robert Allen (USA)
5. Maselino Masoe (AUSTRL)
6. Morrade Hakkar (FRA)
7. Howard Eastman (GB)
8. Erland Betare (FRA)
9. Evans Ashira (DEN)
10. Hassine Cherifi (FRA)
11. Keith Holmes (USA)
12. Lee Blundell (USA)

SUPER WELTERWEIGHTS

Unified Champ: Oscar De La Hoya
Champ: Santiago Samaniego (PAN)

1. Vacant
2. Rhoshii Wells (USA)
3. Angel Hernandez (USA)
4. Fernando Vargas (USA)
5. Travis Simms (USA)
6. Mamadou Thiam (FRA)
7. Akira Ohigashi (JAP)
8. Michael Rask (DEN)
9. Shannan Taylor (AUSTRL)
10. Kofi Jantuah (GHA)
11. Nader Hamdan (AUSTRL)
12. Andrei Pestriaev (RUS)

WELTERWEIGHTS

Champ: Ricardo Mayorga (CR)

1. Vacant
2. Thomas Damgaard (DEN)
3. Michael Trabant (GER)
4. Jose Rivera (USA)
5. Andrew Lewis (GUY)
6. Vince Phillips (USA)
7. Carlos Baldomir (ARG)
8. Danny Perez (USA)
9. Cory Spinks (USA)
10. Frederic Klose (FRA)
11. Felix Flores (PR)
12. Hercules Kyvelos (CAN)

SUPER LIGHTWEIGHTS

Unified Champ: Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)
Champ: Diobelys Hurtado (CUB)

1. Soulemane M'Baye (FRA)
2. Sharmba Mitchell (USA)
3. Ricky Hatton (GB)
4. Oktay Urkal (TUR)
5. Randall Bailey (USA)
6. Khalid Rahilou (FRA)
7. Micky Ward (USA)
8. Zab Judah (USA)
9. Ener Julio (COL)
10. Masakazu Satake (JAP)
11. Antonio Mesquita (BRA)
12. James Leija (USA)

LIGHTWEIGHTS

Champ: Leonard Dorin (CAN)

1. Miguel Callist (PAN)
2. Julien Lorcy (FRA)
3. Lakva Sim (MON)
4. Juan Lazcano (USA)
5. Raul Balbi (ARG)
6. Steve Johnston (USA)
7. Juan Gomez-Trinidad (PR)
8. Prawet Singwangcha (THAI)
9. Angel Manfredy (USA)
10. Edson Xuxa Nascimento (BRA)
11. Colin Dunne (GB)
12. Alex Trujillo (USA)

SUPER FEATHERWEIGHTS

Unified Champ: Acelino Freitas (BRA)
Champ: Yodsanan Nanthachai (THAI)

1. Joel Casamayor (CUB)
2. Jorge Barrios (ARG)
3. Phillip Ndou (SA)
4. Tontcho Tontchev (BUL)
5. Jose Miguel Cotto (PR)
6. Silvano Usini (ITA)
7. Carlos Hernandez (SAL)
8. Jesus Chavez (MEX)
9. Nate Campbell (USA)
10. Yong Soo Choi (KOR)
11. Randy Suico (PHIL)
12. Nobuto Honmo (JAP)

FEATHERWEIGHTS

Champ: Derrick Gainer (USA)

1. Daniel Seda (PR)
2. Juan Manuel Marquez (MEX)
3. Marco Antonio Barrera (MEX)
4. Naseem Hamed (GB)
5. Injin Chi (KOR)
6. Antonio Cermeno (VEN)
7. Lewis Woods (US)
8. Chris John (IND)
9. Takashi Koshimoto (JAP)
10. Spend Abazi (DEN)
11. Victor Polo (COL)
12. Oscar Leon (COL)

SUPER BANTAMWEIGHTS

Champ: Osamu Sato (JAP)

1. Salim Medjkoune (FRA)
2. Paulie Ayala (USA)
3. Yoddamrong Sithyodthong (THAI)
4. Yober Ortega (VEN)
5. Kozo Ishii (JAP)
6. Johnny Armour (GB)
7. Somsak Sithchachawan (THAI)
8. Michael Brodie (GB)
9. Nadel Hussein (AUSTRL)
10. Enrique Sanchez (MEX)
11. Napapol Kiattisachokchai (THAI)
12. Israel Vasquez (MEX)

BANTAMWEIGHTS

Champ: Johnny Bredahl (DEN)

1. Leo Gamez (VEN)
2. Rafael Marquez (MEX)
3. Eidy Moya (VEN)
4. Hideki Todaka (JAP)
5. Yokthai Sithoar (THAI)
6. Toshiaki Nishioka (JAP)
7. Ratanachai Vorapin (THAI)
8. Genaro Garcia (USA)
9. Nobuaki Naka (JAP)
10. Heriberto Ruiz (MEX)
11. Moises Castro (NIC)
12. Danny Romero (USA)

SUPER FLYWEIGHTS

Champ: Alexander Munoz (VEN)

1. Vacant
2. Saen Sow Ploenchit (THAI)
3. Sornpichai Pisnurachank (THAI)
4. Katsushige Kawashima (JAP)
5. Gerry Penalosa (PHIL)
6. Mbwana Matumla (TNZ)
7. Luis Bolanos (COL)
8. Luis Perez (NIC)
9. Takuya Kiya (JAP)
10. Jesus Rojas (VEN)
11. Meiji C.P. Gym (THAI)
12. Sot Sor Veerapol (THAI)

FLYWEIGHTS

Champ: Eric Morel (USA)

1. Denkaosaen Kaowitch (THAI)
2. Lorenzo Parra (VEN)
3. Hidenobu Honda (JAP)
4. Mzukisi Sikali (SA)
5. Damaen Kelly (GB)
6. Alexander Mahmutov (RUS)
7. Masaki Nakamuna (JAP)
8. Isidro Garcia (MEX)
9. Hiroshi Nakano (JAP)
10. Tomas Rojas (MEX)
11. Hussein Hussein (AUSTRL)
12. Peter Culshaw (GB)

LIGHT FLYWEIGHTS

Champ: Rosendo Alvarez (NIC)

1. Bebis Mendoza (COL)
2. Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)
3. Pichit C. Siriwat (THAI)
4. Masibulele Makepula (SA)
5. Alex Sanchez (PR)
6. Edgar Velasquez (VEN)
7. Marvin Tampos (PHIL)
8. Eric Ortiz (MEX)
9. Wendyl Janiola (PHIL)
10. Rodel Mayol (PHIL)
11. Tatsuo Kayashida (JAP)
12. Mhikiza Myekeni (SA)

MINIMUMWEIGHTS

Champ: Noel Arambulet (VEN)

1. Chana Porpaoin (THAI)
2. Joma Gamboa (PHIL)
3. Keitaro Hoshino (JAP)
4. Khulile Makeba (SA)
5. Songkram Porpaoin (THAI)
6. Manasak Yootthakit (THAI)
7. Daniel Reyes (COL)
8. Jaewon Kim (KOR)
9. Genki Ohnaka (JAP)
10. Pornsawan Pramuk (THAI)
11. Wandee Charoen (THAI)
12. Juan Landaeta (VEN)

WBC RATINGS

(Ratings as of August 2002)

HEAVYWEIGHTS

Champ: Lennox Lewis (GB)

1. Vitali Klitschko (UKR)
2. Evander Holyfield (USA)
3. Hasim Rahman (USA)
4. Mike Tyson (USA)
5. Jameel McCline (USA)
6. David Tua (NZ)
7. Fres Oquendo (USA)
8. Chris Byrd (USA)
9. Juan Carlos Gomez (CUB)
10. Danny Williams (GB)
11. Clifford Etienne (USA)
12. Jeremy Williams (USA)
13. Kirk Johnson (CAN)
14. Lamon Brewster (USA)
15. Tim Witherspoon (USA)
16. Michael Moorer (USA)
17. Ray Mercer (USA)
18. Joe Mesi (USA)
19. Larry Donald (USA)
20. Lance Whitaker (USA)
21. Luan Krasniqi (GER)
22. Maurice Harris (USA)
23. Monte Barrett (USA)
24. Brian Nielsen (DEN)
25. Vaughn Bean (USA)
26. Nikolay Valouev (RUS)
27. Timo Hoffman (GB)
28. Dimitry Bakhtov (KAZ)
29. Peter Okhello (UGA)
30. David Defiagbon (CAN)

CRUISERWEIGHTS

Champ: Vacant

1. Wayne Braithwaite (GUY)
2. Vincenzo Cantatore (ITA)
3. O'Neil Bell (USA)
4. Alexander Gurov (UKR)
5. Louis Azille (DR)
6. Dale Brown (CAN)
7. James Toney (USA)
8. Sebastiaan Rothmann (SA)
9. Michael Nunn (USA)
10. Turan Bagci (TUR)
11. Carlos Cruzat (CHI)
12. Jason Robinson (USA)
13. Bruce Scott (GB)
14. Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)
15. Kelvin Davis (USA)
16. Ramon Garbey (USA)
17. Rudiger May (GER)
18. Virgil Hill (USA)
19. Luis Andres Pineda (PAN)
20. Carl Thompson (GB)
21. Alain Simon (FRA)
22. Krysztov Wlodarczyk (POL)
23. Pietro Aurino (ITA)
24. Guillermo Jones (PAN)
25. Roman Kovalchuk (UKR)
26. Mohamed Ben Guesmia (ALG)
27. Kenny Keene (USA)
28. Frederic Serrat (FRA)
29. Alexander Petkovic (GER)
30. Gregory Drosd (RUS)

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS

Champ: Roy Jones (USA)

1. Clinton Woods (GB)
2. Yawe Davis (ITA)
3. Antonio Tarver (USA)
4. Mads Larsen (DEN)
5. Eric Harding (USA)
6. Julio Gonzalez (USA)
7. Reggie Johnson (USA)
8. Jorge Castro (ARG)
9. Montell Griffin (USA)
10. Derrick Harmon (USA)
11. Glenn Kelly (AUSTRL)
12. Syd Vanderpool (CAN)
13. Paul Briggs (AUSTRL)
14. David Telesco (USA)
15. Thomas Ulrich (GER)
16. Kamel Amrane (FRA)
17. Mario Tonus (ITA)
18. Silvio Branco (ITA)
19. Glencoffe Johnson (USA)
20. Demetrius Jenkins (USA)
21. Tomasz Adamek (POL)
22. Stipe Drews (CRO)
23. George Jones (USA)
24. Arturo Rivera (MEX)
25. Alejandro Lakatus (ROM)
26. Rocky Torres (USA)
27. Sergio Baez (ARG)
28. Elvir Muriqi (ALB)
29. Tony Oakey (GB)
30. Julian Letterlough (USA)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Champ: Eric Lucas (CAN)

1. Markus Beyer (GER)
2. David Starie (GB)
3. Danilo Haussler (GER)
4. Mikkel Kessler (DEN)
5. Antwun Echols (USA)
6. Zafarou Ballogou (TOGO)
7. Glenn Catley (GB)
8. Dingaan Thobela (SA)
9. Omar Sheika (USA)
10. Jurgen Brahmer (GER)
11. Mehdi Sanoune (FRA)
12. Yoshinori Nishizawa (JAP)
13. Dan Batchelder (USA)
14. Henry Porras (CR)
15. Robin Reid (GB)
16. Brian Magee (GB)
17. Mario Veit (GER)
18. Anthony Hanshaw (USA)
19. Scott Pemberton (USA)
20. Rudy Markussen (DEN)
21. Sam Hill (USA)
22. Nordin Ben Salah (HOL)
23. James Lubwana (UGA)
24. David Reid (USA)
25. Vinny Paz (USA)
26. Juan Nelongo (SPA)
27. Anthony Mundine (AUSTRL)
28. Jeff Lacy (USA)
29. Ross Thompson (USA)
30. Jean Paul Mendy (FRA)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS

Champ: Bernard Hopkins (USA)

1. Erland Betare (FRA)
2. Felix Trinidad (PR)
3. Morrade Hakkar (FRA)
4. Tito Mendoza (PAN)
5. Naotaka Hozumi (JAP)
6. Antonio Perugino (ITA)
7. Raymond Joval (HOL)
8. Cristian Sanavia (ITA)
9. Robert Allen (USA)
10. Raul Marquez (USA)
11. Kuvanych Toygonbayev (UZB)
12. Alejandro Berrio (COL)
13. Oure Evans (KEN)
14. Aslan Kodzoev (RUS)
15. Carl Daniels (USA)
16. Jerry Elliott (NIG)
17. Travis Simms (USA)
18. Andras Galfi (HUN)
19. Tokunbo Olajide (CAN)
20. Jorge Sendra (SPA)
21. Mariano Carrera (ARG)
22. Tony Ayala (USA)
23. Lansana Djallo (BEL)
24. Delroy Leslie (GB)
25. Kingsley Ikeke (CAN)
26. Quentin Smith (USA)
27. Jermain Taylor (USA)
28. Stephan Trabant (GER)
29. Satoru Suzuki (JAP)
30. Maselino Masoe (NZ)

SUPER WELTERWEIGHTS

Champ: Oscar De La Hoya (US

1. Fitz Vanderpool (CAN)
2. Nader Hamdan (AUSTRL)
3. Bronco McKart (USA)
4. Roman Karmazin (RUS)
5. Akira Ohigashi (JAP)
6. Wayne Alexander (GB)
7. Mamadou Thiam (FRA)
8. Steve Roberts (GB)
9. Angel Hernandez (MEX)
10. Kofi Jantuah (GHA)
11. Richard Williams (GB)
12. Kassim Ouma (USA)
13. Michael Rask (DEN)
14. Christophe Canclaux (FRA
15. Alex Bunema (USA)
16. Rhoshii Wells (USA)
17. J.C. Candelo (COL)
18. Sergei Dzindzirak (UKR)
19. Santiago Samaniego (PAN)
20. Mihaly Kotai (HUN)
21. Rodney Jones (USA)
22. Carlos Bojorquez (USA)
23. Emmett Linton (USA)
24. Sam Garr (USA)
25. Kirino Garcia (MEX)
26. Michael Jones (GB)
27. Joachim Alcine (CAN)
28. Christopher Henry (BAR)
29. Gary Jones (USA)
30. Joya Kawai (JAP)

WELTERWEIGHTS

Champ: Vernon Forrest (USA)

1. Shane Mosley (USA)
2. Jose Luis Cruz (MEX)
3. Carlos Baldomir (ARG)
4. Thomas Damgaard (DEN)
5. Danny Perez (USA)
6. Sergio Martinez (ARG)
7. Hercules Kyvelos (CAN)
8. Manuel Gomez (MEX)
9. Rafael Pineda (COL)
10. Rev Santillan (PHIL)
11. Michel Trabant (GER)
12. Andrew Lewis (GUY)
13. Jawaid Khaliq (GB)
14. Michele Orlando (ITA)
15. Christian Bladt (DEN)
16. Alexander Vetoun (UKR)
17. Golden Johnson (USA)
18. James Hare (GB)
19. Julian Holland (AUSTRL)
20. Alessandro Duran (ITA)
21. Felix Flores (PR)
22. Jeffrey Hill (USA)
23. Hassan Al (DEN)
24. Frederic Klose (FRA)
25. Juan Carlos Rubio (MEX)
26. Neil Sinclair (GB)
27. Luther Smith (USA)
28. Charles Whitaker (CAY)
29. Miguel Rodriguez (USA)
30. Carlos Quintana (PR)

SUPER LIGHTWEIGHTS

Champ: Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)

1. Gianluca Branco (ITA)
2. Ricky Hatton (GB)
3. James Leija (USA)
4. Oktay Urkal (TUR)
5. Micky Ward (USA)
6. Arturo Gatti (CAN)
7. Zab Judah (USA)
8. Omar Weis (ARG)
9. Masakazu Satake (JAP)
10. Hector Camacho Jr. (PR)
11. Gabriel Mapuoka (FRA)
12. Miguel Cotto (PR)
13. Sharmba Mitchell (USA)
14. Eamonn Magee (GB)
15. Soulemane M'Baye (FRA)
16. Ben Tackie (GHA)
17. Golden Johnson (USA)
18. Ener Julio (COL)
19. Francisco Bojado (MEX)

20. Wilfredo Vilches (ARG)
21. Randall Bailey (USA)
22. Mikhail Krivolapov (RUS)
23. Ricardo Williams (USA)
24. Vince Phillips (USA)
25. Junior Witter (GB)
26. Hiroyuki Sakamoto (JAP)
27. Vivian Harris (USA)
28. Terronn Millett (USA)
29. Pablo Sarmiento (ARG)
30. Fabrice Colombel (FRA)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Champ: Floyd Mayweather (USA)
1. Jose Luis Castillo (MEX)
2. Steve Johnston (USA)
3. Juan Lazcano (USA)
4. Stefano Zoff (ITA)
5. Carlos Gerena (PR)
6. Julien Lorcy (FRA)
7. Victoriano Damian Sosa (DR)
8. Aldo Rios (ARG)
9. Colin Dunne (GB)
10. Bobby Vanzie (GB)
11. Dennis Laurente (PHIL)
12. Sandro Casamonica (ITA)
13. Julian Wheeler (USA)
14. Juan Valenzuela (MEX)
15. Jose Luis Juarez (MEX)
16. Diego Jimenez (ARG)
17. Julio Diaz (USA)
18. Zimele Mpusula (SA)
19. Miguel Callist (PAN)
20. Lawrence Ngobeni (SA)
21. Cesar Bazan (MEX)
22. Efren Hinojosa (MEX)
23. Michele Delli Paoli (ITA)
24. Esteban Mortalez (COL)
25. Cristian Bejarano (MEX)
26. Gary Balletto (USA)
27. Sayan Sanchat (RUS)
28. Michael Clark (USA)
29. Steve Murray (GB)
30. Gil Alipio (MEX)

SUPER FEATHERWEIGHTS
Champ: Vacant
1. Sirimongkol Singmanassuk (THAI)
2. Kengo Nagashima (JAP)
3. Jesus Chavez (USA)
4. Philip Ndou (SA)
5. Randy Suico (PHIL)
6. Carlos Hernandez (EL SALV)
7. Affif Djelti (FRA)
8. Joel Casamayor (CUB)
9. Tontcho Tontchev (BUL)
10. Kevin Kelley (USA)
11. Daniel Alicea (PR)
12. Jorge Paez (MEX)
13. Alejandro Gonzalez (MEX)
14. Pedro Miranda (SPA)
15. Wilfredo Vazquez (PR)
16. Jorge Barrios (ARG)
17. Fernando Trejo (MEX)
18. Boris Sinitsin (RUS)
19. Mzonke Fana (SA)
20. Orlando Salido (MEX)
21. Nate Campbell (USA)
22. Yongsoo Choi (KOR)
23. Javier Alvarez (ARG)
24. Alex Arthur (GB)
25. Silvano Usini (ITA)
26. Lamont Pearson (USA)
27. Javier Jauregui (MEX)
28. Daniel Attah (NIG)
29. Miguel Angel Huerta (MEX)
30. Ricardo Silva (ARG)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Champ: Vacant
1. Erik Morales (MEX)
2. Injin Chi (KOR)
3. Juan Manuel Marquez (MEX)
4. Naseem Hamed (GB)
5. Michael Brodie (GB)
6. Takashi Koshimoto (JAP)
7. Manuel Calvo (SPA)
8. Robbie Peden (AUSTRL)
9. Scott Harrison (GB)
10. Manuel Medina (MEX)
11. Luis Fuentes (MEX)
12. William Abelyan (USA)
13. Guty Espadas (MEX)
14. Junior Jones (USA)
15. Takalani Noluvo (SA)
16. Panther Yanagida (JAP)
17. Hector Acero-Sanchez (DR)
18. Fernando Velardez (MEX)
19. Daniel Seda (PR)
20. Yangsoo Sung (KOR)
21. Orlando Soto (PAN)
22. David Murillo (MEX)
23. Zahir Raheem (USA)
24. Frankie Toledo (USA)
25. Cristobal Cruz (MEX)
26. Roger Medal (NIC)
27. Oscar Leon (COL)
28. Rocky Juarez (USA)
29. Hector Velazquez (MEX)
30. Anthony Tshehla (SA)

SUPER BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Willie Jorrin (USA)
1. Kiattisak Chocchoi (THAI)
2. Paulie Ayala (USA)
3. Israel Vazquez (MEX)
4. Salim Medjkoune (FRA)
5. Nadel Hussein (AUSTRL)
6. Manabu Fukushima (JAP)
7. Kozo Ishii (JAP)
8. Junichi Watanabe (JAP)
9. Jyunichi Nakazato (JAP)
10. Wayne McCullough (IRE)
11. Emmanuel Lucero (USA)
12. Lehlo Ledwaba (SA)
13. Bones Adams (USA)
14. Celestino Caballero (PAN)
15. Arnel Barotillo (AUSTRL)
16. Akihiro Kanai (JAP)
17. Youngjin Cho (KOR)
18. David Donis (USA)
19. Jaekwang Chung (KOR)
20. Fabio Oliva (ARG)
21. Yober Ortega (VEN)
22. Wethya Singwangcha (THAI)
23. Mahyar Monshipour (FRA)
24. Michael Alldis (GB)
25. Frankie Archuleta (USA)
26. Joan Guzman (DR)
27. Turcay Kaya (FRA)
28. Phillip Payne (USA)
29. Norihisa Tomimoto (JAP)
30. Jose Luis Valbuena (VEN)

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Veerapol Sahaprom (THAI)
1. Toshiaki Nishioka (JAP)
2. Genaro Garcia (USA)
3. Rafael Marquez (MEX)
4. Jess Maca (PHIL)
5. Diego Morales (MEX)
6. Spend Abazi (DEN)
7. Noel Wilders (GB)
8. David Guerault (FRA)
9. Ricardo Vargas (MEX)
10. Hugo Dianzo (MEX)
11. Abner Cordero (PHIL)
12. Danny Romero (USA)
13. Julio Zarate (MEX)
14. Heriberto Ruiz (MEX)
15. Mark Johnson (USA)
16. Julio Gamboa (NIC)
17. Francisco Mateos (MEX)
18. Gerardo Martinez (MEX)
19. Fabien Guillerme (FRA)
20. Kyonchul Park (KOR)
21. Eidy Moya (VEN)
22. Pete Frissina (USA)
23. Roger Gonzalez (USA)
24. Moises Castro (NIC)
25. Nicky Booth (GB)
26. Jhonny Gonzalez (MEX)
27. Nobuaki Naka (JAP)
28. Ryuichi Minoriyama (JAP)
29. Steve Molitor (CAN)
30. Eduardo Escobedo (MEX)

SUPER FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Masamori Tokuyama (JAP)
1. Gerry Penalosa (PHIL)
2. Dimitri Kirilov (RUS)
3. Reynaldo Hurtado (COL)
4. Luis Bolanos (COL)
5. Saen Sow Ploenchit (THAI)
6. Malcolm Tunacao (PHIL)
7. Katsushige Kawashima (JAP)
8. Jose Beranza (MEX)
9. Mauricio Pastrana (COL)
10. Sot Sot Veeraphol (THAI)
11. Shingo Sasaki (JAP)
12. Erick Lopez (MEX)
13. Medgoen Singsurat (THAI)
14. Hideyasu Ishihara (JAP)
15. Luis Perez (NIC)
16. Eiji Kojima (JAP)
17. Takuya Kiya (JAP)
18. Alexander Knight (RUS)
19. Ricardo Cordoba (PAN)
20. Oscar Andrade (MEX)
21. Erik Barcelona (PHIL)
22. Sergio Santillan (ARG)
23. Julio Coronel (COL)
24. Jovy Oracion (PHIL)
25. Shin Ogata (JAP)
26. Trinidad Mendoza (MEX)
27. Tat Torres (MEX)
28. Lunga Ntontela (SA)
29. Roberto Bonilla (NIC)
30. Jose Navarro (USA)

FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Pongsaklek Wonjongkam (THAI)
1. Alexander Mahmutov (RUS)
2. Hidenobu Honda (JAP)
3. Hiroshi Nakano (JAP)
4. Wandee Chor Chareon (THAI)
5. Masaki Nakamuna (JAP)
6. Hussein Hussein (AUSTRL)
7. Randy Mangubat (PHIL)
8. Hawk Makepula (SA)
9. Gerson Guerrero (MEX)
10. Everardo Morales (MEX)
11. Omar Narvaez (ARG)
12. Damaen Kelly (GB)
13. Tomas Rojas (MEX)
14. Luis Maldonado (MEX)
15. Takefumi Sakata (JAP)
16. Ivan Hernandez (MEX)
17. Koji Koyama (JAP)
18. Rolly Lunas (PHIL)
19. Alejandro Montiel (MEX)
20. Mimoun Chent (FRA)
21. Lorenzo Parra (VEN)
22. Hayato Asai (JAP)
23. Gabriel Elizondo (USA)
24. Evaristo Primero (MEX)
25. Daisuke Naito (JAP)
26. Peter Culshaw (GB)
27. Yosuke Morishima (JAP)
28. Gilberto Keb-Baas (MEX)
29. Jason Booth (GB)
30. Gabula Vabaza (SA)

LIGHT FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Yosam Choi (KOR)
1. Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)
2. Juanito Rubillar (PHIL)
3. Agustin Luna (MEX)
4. Jesus Martinez (MEX)
5. Bebis Mendoza (COL)
6. Eric Ortiz (MEX)
7. Tatsuo Hayashida (JAP)
8. John Molina (COL)
9. Wendyl Janiola (PHIL)
10. Rodrigo Garcia (MEX)
11. Saman Sorjaturong (THAI)
12. Victor Burgos (MEX)
13. Alex Sanchez (PR)
14. Pilkoo Kang (KOR)
15. Rafael Lozano (SPA)
16. Marvin Tampos (PHIL)
17. Jun Kitano (JAP)
18. Vuyisile Bebe (SA)
19. Joma Gamboa (PHIL)
20. Juan Centero (NIC)
21. Shingo Yamaguchi (JAP)
22. Jinho Kim (KOR)
23. Ernesto Castro (NIC)
24. Manuel Vargas (MEX)
25. Minsoo Jang (KOR)
26. Andrea Sarritzu (ITA)
27. Omar Nino (MEX)
28. Keisuke Yokoyama (JAP)
29. Steve Msimango (SA)
30. Samransak Singmanassak (THAI)

STRAWWEIGHTS
Champ: Jose Antonio Aguirre (MEX)
1. Khulile Makeba (SA)
2. Ernesto Rubillar (PHIL)
3. Isaac Bustos (MEX)
4. Noel Tunacao (PHIL)
5. Yasuo Tokimitsu (JAP)
6. Heriberto Gijon (PHIL)
7. Noel Arambulet (VEN)
8. Jaewon Kim (KOR)
9. Chana Porpaoin (THAI)
10. Juan Palacios (NIC)
11. Makoto Suzuki (JAP)
12. Satoshi Kogumasaka (JAP)
13. Sarikalek O. Eakarin (THAI)
14. Rodel Mayol (PHIL)
15. Genki Ohnaka (JAP)
16. Hiroshi Nakajima (JAP)
17. Jairo Arango (PAN)
18. Hiroshi Matsumoto (JAP)
19. Hiroyuki Abe (JAP)
20. Omar Soto (MEX)
21. Eagle Okuda (JAP)
22. Wele Maqolo (SA)
23. Sizwe Sinyabi (SA)
24. Manny Melchor (PHIL)
25. Valentin Leon (MEX)
26. Fernando Luna (MEX)
27. Miguel Barrera (MEX)
28. Daisuke Iida (JAP)
29. Lorenzo Trejo (MEX)
30. Decho Bankluaygym (THAI)

IBF RATINGS
(Ratings as of October 2002)

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: Vacant
1. Chris Byrd (USA)
2. Evander Holyfield (USA)
3. David Tua (NZ)
4. Hasim Rahman (USA)
5. Jameel McCline (USA)
6. Vitali Klitschko (UKR)
7. Fres Oquendo (USA)
8. Clifford Etienne (USA)
9. Kirk Johnson (CAN)
10. Lou Savarese (USA)
11. Monte Barrett (USA)
12. Tommy Martin (USA)

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Champ: Vassiliy Jirov (KAZ)
1. James Toney (USA)
2. Vacant
3. O'Neil Bell (USA)
4. Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)
5. Alexander Gurov (UKR)
6. Vincenzo Cantatore (ITA)
7. Ravea Springs (USA)
8. Jason Robinson (USA)
9. Virgil Hill (USA)
10. Arthur Williams (USA)
11. Kelvin Davis (USA)
12. Dale Brown (CAN)

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS
Champ: Roy Jones (USA)
1. Antonio Tarver (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Montell Griffin (USA)
4. Julio Gonzalez (USA)
5. David Telesco (USA)
6. Derrick Harmon (USA)
7. Eric Harding (USA)
8. Reggie Johnson (USA)
9. Yawe Davis (ITA)
10. Paul Briggs (AUSTRL)
11. Glencoffe Johnson (USA)
12. Jorge Castro (ARG)

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Sven Ottke (GER)
1. Antwun Echols (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Danilo Haussler (GER)
4. Mads Larsen (DEN)
5. David Starie (GB)
6. Thomas Tate (USA)
7. Charles Brewer (USA)
8. Glenn Catley (GB)
9. Markus Beyer (GER)
10. Richard Grant (USA)
11. Fernando Zuniga (USA)
12. Robin Reid (ENG)

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Bernard Hopkins (USA)
1. Robert Allen (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Carl Daniels (USA)
4. Erland Betare (FRA)
5. Raymond Joval (HOL)
6. Tito Mendoza (PAN)
7. Bert Schenk (GER)
8. Howard Eastman (GB)
9. Morrade Hakkar (FRA)
10. Antonio Perugino (ITA)
11. Cristian Sanavia (ITA)
12. Ali Ennebati (FRA)

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Champ: Winky Wright (USA)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Angel Hernandez (USA)
4. Kassim Ouma (USA)
5. Andrei Pestriaev (RUS)
6. Alex Bunema (USA)
7. Bronco McKart (USA)
8. J.C. Candelo (COL)
9. Emmett Linton (USA)
10. Travis Simms (USA)
11. Nader Hamdan (AUSTRL)
12. Steve Roberts (GB)

WELTERWEIGHTS
Champ: Michele Piccirillo (ITA)
1. Cory Spinks (USA)
2. Vacant
3. Thomas Damgaard (DEN)
4. Hercules Kyvelos (CAN)
5. Shane Mosley (USA)
6. Jose Rivera (USA)
7. Rafael Pineda (COL)
8. James Hare (ENG)
9. Jose Celaya (USA)
10. Antonio Diaz (MEX)
11. Kermit Cintron (USA)
12. Robert Frazier (USA)

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Champ: Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Micky Ward (USA)
4. Arturo Gatti (USA)
5. Emanuel Augustus (USA)
6. Zab Judah (USA)
7. Oktay Urkal (TUR)
8. Ben Tackie (GHA)
9. Omar Weis (ARG)
10. Carlos Vilches (ARG)
11. James Leija (USA)
12. Randall Bailey (USA)

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Champ: Paul Spadafora (USA)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Juan Lazcano (USA)
4. Angel Manfredy (USA)
5. Victoriano Sosa (DR)
6. Steve Johnston (USA)
7. Julian Wheeler (USA)
8. Leavander Johnson (USA)
9. Alex Trujillo (PR)
10. Juan Gomez Trinidad (PR)
11. Julien Lorcy (FRA)
12. Dorin Spivey (USA)

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Champ: Vacant
1. Steve Forbes (USA)
2. David Santos (USA)
3. Jesus Chavez (USA)
4. Carlos Hernandez (USA)
5. Joel Casamayor (USA)
6. Phillip Ndou (SA)
7. Nate Campbell (USA)
8. Jorge Barrios (ARG)
9. Daniel Attah (USA)
10. Orlando Salido (MEX)
11. Lamont Pearson (USA)
12. Daniel Alicea (USA)

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Champ: Vacant
1. Juan Manuel Marquez (MEX)
2. Manuel Medina (MEX)
3. Marco Antonio Barrera (MEX)
4. Oscar Leon (PR)
5. Frankie Toledo (USA)
6. Johnny Tapia (USA)
7. Michael Brodie (ENG)
8. Robbie Peden (AUSTRL)
9. William Abelyan (USA)
10. Victor Polo (COL)
11. Naseem Hamed (ENG)
12. Istvan Kovacs (HUN)

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Champ: Manny Pacquaio (PHIL)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Jose Luis Valbuena (ARG)
4. F. Rakkiatgym (INDO)
5. Paulie Ayala (USA)
6. Lehlo Ledwaba (SA)
7. Fernando Velardez (USA)
8. Enrique Sanchez (MEX)
9. Jorge Eliecer Julio (COL)
10. Nadel Hussein (AUSTRL)
11. David Donis (USA)
12. Bones Adams (USA)

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Tim Austin (USA)
1. Rafael Marquez (MEX)
2. Vacant
3. Pete Frissina (USA)
4. Diego Morales (MEX)
5. Genaro Garcia (MEX)
6. Hugo Dianzo (MEX)
7. Roger Gonzalez (USA)
8. Adan Vargas (MEX)
9. David Guerault (FRA)
10. Ricardo Vargas (MEX)
11. Ratanachai Vorapin (THAI)
12. Spend Abazi (DEN)

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Champ: Felix Machado (VEN)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Martin Castillo (MEX)
4. Gerry Penalosa (PHIL)
5. Luis Bolano (COL)
6. Ricardo Vargas (USA)
7. Saen Sor Ploenchit (THAI)
8. Samson 3K-Battery (THAI)
9. Katsushige Kawashima (JAP)
10. Fahsung 3K-Battery (THAI)
11. Kobayashi Yosuke (JAP)
12. Oscar Andrade (MEX)

FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Irene Pacheco (COL)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Damaen Kelly (GB)
4. Alejandro Montiel (MEX)
5. Alexander Mahmutov (RUS)
6. Wandee Chareon (THAI)
7. Hussein Hussein (LEB)
8. Masaki Nakanuma (JAP)
9. Mauricio Pastrana (COL)
10. Mike Trejo (USA)
11. Randy Mangubat (PHIL)
12. Angel Priolo (COL)

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Ricardo Lopez (MEX)
1. Jose Burgos (MEX)
2. Alexander Sanchez (PR)
3. Bebis Mendoza (COL)
4. Melchor Cob Castro (MEX)
5. Wendyl Janiola (PHIL)
6. Fahlan Sakreerin (THAI)
7. Noel Tunacao (PHIL)
8. Juan Keb Baas (MEX)
9. Will Grigsby (USA)
10. Eric Ortiz (MEX)
11. Celso Danggud (PHIL)
12. Dimitri Kirilov (RUS)

MINI FLYWEIGHTS
Champ: Miguel Barrera (MEX)
1. Vacant
2. Vacant
3. Daniel Reyes (COL)
4. Ernesto Rubillar (PHIL)
5. Chana Porpaoin (THAI)
6. Hiroshi Matsumoto (JAP)
7. Roberto Leyva (MEX)
8. Jaewon Kim (KOR)
9. Muhammad Rachman (INDO)
10. Joma Gamboa (PHIL)
11. Sarikalrk Ekarin (THAI)
12. Isaac Bustos (MEX)

CLASSIC

From THE RING, September 1980

DURAN!

The RING's Poll Of Old-Time Experts

By Jack Fiske

"The monster is loose," the television commentator warns the watching millions. "Roberto Duran, the monster, is loose," he repeats, and the spectators stir expectantly.

In the ring, the pride of Panama savagely stalks another victim in search of another knockout, another statistic for historians to evaluate.

Roberto Duran! A fabulous name in boxing since he won the WBA lightweight title in 1972. A throwback to the old days, they claim. Magic at the box office. A god to the fans. Awesome in approach, forboding to opponents. A legend in his own time. A hero the writers can readily immortalize without sparing the adjectives.

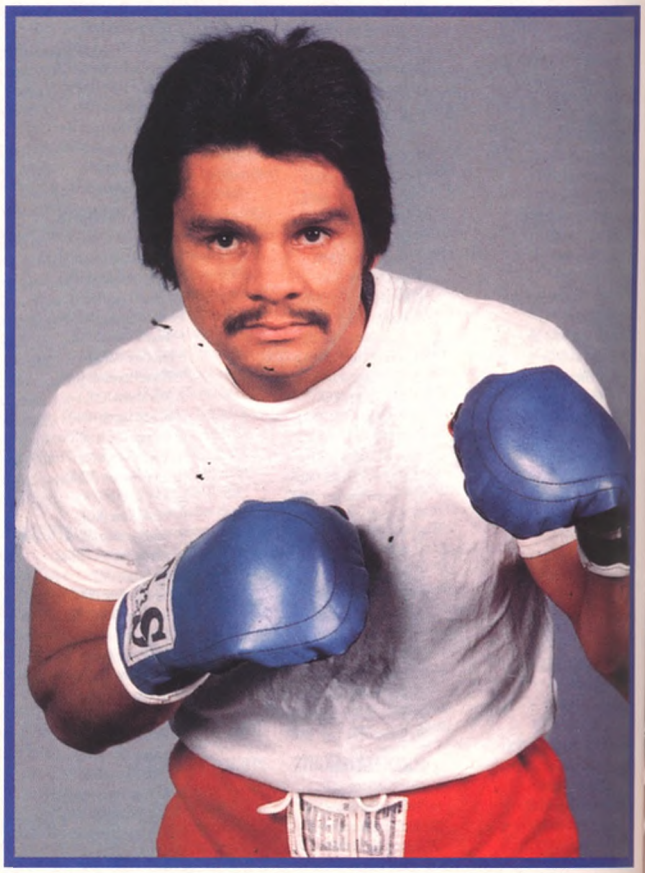
Fifty-five knockouts in 72 fights; "Manos De Piedras," hands of stone; defeated only once. The greatest lightweight of all-time, according to the Boxing Writers of America (who are they?) in a 1978 poll. But while the accolade was seconded by many, it was derided by others.

How good is Duran really, as a lightweight that is?

He established his credentials as one of boxing's all-time greats with his recent victory over Sugar Ray Leonard in Montreal, a rare two-division champion.

But greatest lightweight of all-time? Greater than Joe Gans, Benny Leonard, Tony Canzoneri, Ike Williams, Lew Tendler, Lou Ambers, Barney Ross, Henry Armstrong, Jimmy McLarnin, Carlos Ortiz, Joe Brown, Beau Jack, Billy Petrolle, Charley White, Rocky Kansas, and/or Sammy Mandell?

That's a lot of territory, a lot of years, and more pure talent than present-day critics can



Roberto Duran affirmed his credentials as an all-time great with his 15-round decision over Sugar Ray Leonard, but the debate raged on as to where Duran stood among the all-time great lightweights. Duran was selected as the best 135-pounder ever by the Boxing Writers of America in a 1978 poll.

WAS HE THE GREATEST LIGHTWEIGHT CHAMPION OF ALL-TIME?

evaluate without resorting second hand to studying films or listening to yarns in the gymnasium or the tavern.

It's an impossible assignment to determine "the best of all-time." Nobody alive has seen 'em all, but there are sexagenarians, septuagenarians, and octogenarians around, still in boxing, who have witnessed the old-timers, as well as Duran, and are authorized to make comparisons.

To determine the veteran observers' appraisal of Duran as a great lightweight, a handful of old-timers, all beyond 60 years of age, were polled. The results were mixed.

The respondents included a manager, a matchmaker, a trainer (one of Duran's handlers), two writers, and a radio-television commentator. They have viewed the cream—excluding Gans—from Leonard to the present day.

To the questions: How do you rank Duran among the lightweights you have seen, and how would Duran have fared against former great lightweights? Their responses, in alphabetical order, were as follows:

Ray Arcel, 81 years old, Duran's co-trainer for eight years, former cornerman for Benny Leonard during his comeback, and handler of 19 world champions:

"I have watched Duran improve from time to time. He has always been able to adjust to different styles and been able to cope with situations that arose in the ring. That is the mark of a top-notch campaigner. I always felt that Duran could have been right on top of any lightweight division. If he were not the champion, he would have been a leading contender.

"Benny Leonard, in my opinion, was the greatest boxer, pound-for-pound, that I ever saw. He was *the* champion of the best lightweight division anybody has ever seen since 1917. Any of the leading contenders of that period could have been champion if Leonard was not there.

"I feel Duran could have fit into that group and could have proven his ability with the outstanding stars of that period. His strength and punching power could have made it possible for him to more than hold his own with his all-around abilities against all styles of champions who followed Leonard.

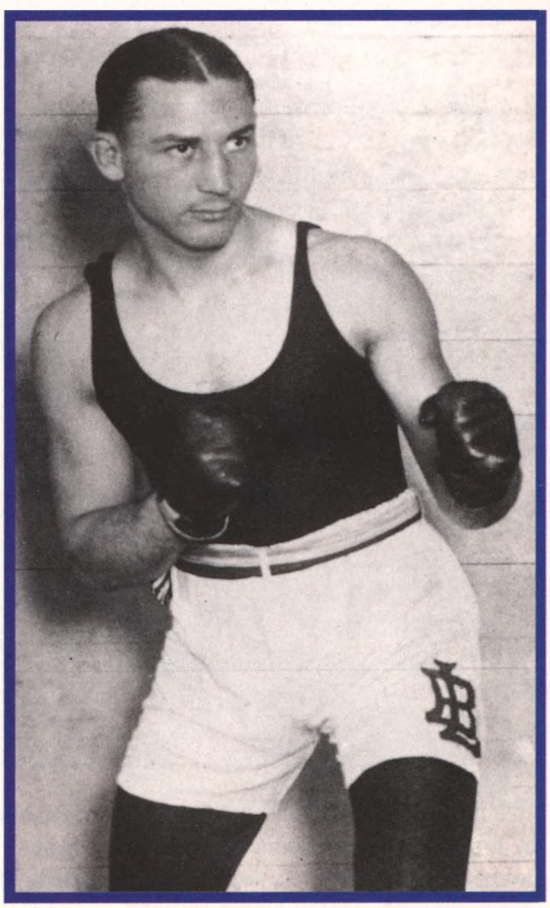
"What a thriller a Duran-Henry Armstrong fight would have been! Lew Tendler might have proven a problem because of his excellent southpaw style—but Duran would have been dangerous all the way. Ross, Canzoneri, Ike Williams, Lew Ambers, Jimmy Carter, Charlie Whitek, Billy Petrolle, Beau Jack are dream matches—but Duran would have proven his ability with every one of these fine champions.

"I know there are many who will disagree, but I know this young man so well and am trying to compare styles and abilities of others whom I also knew so very well. The element of surprise was taught to confuse an opponent, and Duran has learned that lesson well. He can box as well as fight."

Teddy Brenner, former president and matchmaker of Madison Square Garden, 63 years old and a fight follower since 1933:

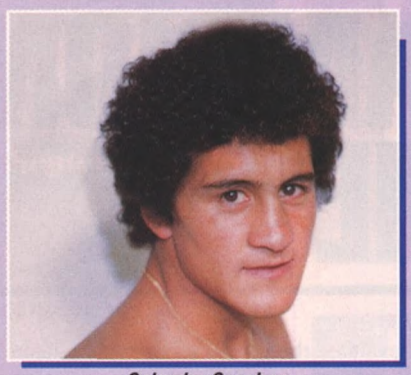
"I don't think Duran could have beaten Billy Petrolle or Sid Terris and they never became champions. In order to really evaluate the merits of a great fighter, you have to wait until he has ended his career, then judge him by the fighters he fought and beat, and also his all-around abilities against all styles of fighters: boxers, punchers, cuties.

"I started out Duran in the Garden against Benny Huertas, whom he knocked out in one round, electrifying fashion. His next was for the title against Ken Buchanan whom he stopped in the 13th round. In his third fight in MSG, he suf-



Benny Leonard (pictured) was the greatest boxer ever, pound-for-pound, in the opinion of Ray Arcel, who trained Duran and also worked with Leonard during his comeback.

THE RING RATINGS, September 1980



Salvador Sanchez

HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Larry Holmes, Easton, PA
1. **Mike Weaver,** Los Angeles, CA
2. **Gerrie Coetzee,** South Africa
3. **Gerry Cooney,** Huntington, NY
4. **Michael Dokes,** Akron, OH
5. **Muhammad Ali,** Los Angeles, CA
6. **Leon Spinks,** St. Louis, MO
7. **Bernardo Mercado,** Colombia
8. **Trevor Berbick,** Canada
9. **John Tate,** Knoxville, TN
10. **Greg Page,** Louisville, KY

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: Matthew Saad Muhammad, Philadelphia, PA
1. **Eddie Mustafa Muhammad,** Brooklyn, NY
2. **Jerry Martin,** Philadelphia, PA
3. **James Scott,** Rahway, NJ
4. **Marvin Johnson,** Indianapolis, IN
5. **Michael Spinks,** St. Louis, MO
6. **Lotte Mwale,** Zambia
7. **Marvin Camel,** Missoula, MT
8. **Alvaro (Yaqui) Lopez,** Stockton, CA
9. **Jesse Burnett,** Los Angeles, CA
10. **John Conteh,** England

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champ: Alan Minter, England
1. **Marvin Hagler,** Brockton, MA
2. **Curtis Parker,** Philadelphia, PA
3. **Vito Antuofermo,** Brooklyn, NY
4. **Fulgencio Obel,** Venezuela
5. **Ronnie Harris,** Akron, OH
6. **Marcos Geraldo,** Mexico
7. **Dwight Davison,** Detroit, MI
8. **Mustafa Hamsho,** Syria
9. **Wilford Scypion,** Port Arthur, TX
10. **Kevin Finnegan,** England

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champ: Ayub Kalule, Denmark
1. **Maurice Hope,** England
2. **Rocky Mattioli,** Argentina
3. **Tony Chiaverini,** Kansas City, MO
4. **Kenny Bristol,** Guyana
5. **Masashi Kudo,** Japan
6. **Nick Ortiz,** Puerto Rico
7. **Tyrone Rackley,** Phoenix, AZ
8. **Steve Delgado,** Puerto Rico
9. **Rocky Mosley Jr.,** Las Vegas, NV
10. **Walter Gomez,** Argentina

WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Roberto Duran, Panama
1. **Sugar Ray Leonard,** Palmer Park, MD
2. **Pipino Cuevas,** Mexico
3. **Wilfred Benitez,** Puerto Rico
4. **Thomas Hearns,** Detroit, MI
5. **Randy Shields,** N. Hollywood, CA
6. **Jorgen Hansen,** Denmark
7. **Pete Ranzany,** Sacramento, CA
8. **Adolfo Viruet,** Hoboken, NJ
9. **Harold Weston Jr.,** New York, NY
10. **Josef Nsubuga,** Uganda

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Antonio Cervantes, Colombia
1. **Saoul Mamby,** New York, NY
2. **Jo Kimpuani,** Zaire
3. **Esteban DeJesus,** Puerto Rico
4. **Sang-Hyun Kim,** Korea
5. **Miguel Montilla,** Dominican Rep
6. **Lennox Blackmore,** Guyana
7. **Juan Jose Gimenez,** Spain
8. **Domingo Ayala,** Puerto Rico
9. **Teo Ozuna,** Dominican Republic
10. **Willie Rodriguez,** Allentown, PA

LIGHTWEIGHTS
World Champ: Vacant
1. **Hilmer Kenty,** Detroit, MI
2. **Jim Watt,** Scotland
3. **Aaron Pryor,** Cincinnati, OH
4. **Ernesto Espana,** Venezuela
5. **Howard Davis Jr.,** Glen Cove, NY
6. **Claude Noel,** Trinidad
7. **Vilomar Fernandez,** Dominican Republic
8. **Johnny Lira,** Chicago, IL
9. **Sean O'Grady,** Oklahoma City, OK
10. **Edwin Viruet,** Puerto Rico

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS
World Champ: Samuel Serrano, Puerto Rico
1. **Alexis Arguello,** Nicaragua
2. **Bobby Chacon,** Los Angeles, CA
3. **Frankie Baltazar,** Los Angeles, CA
4. **Rafael (Bazooka) Limon,** Mexico
5. **Roberto Elizondo,** Corpus Christi, T
6. **Victor Echegaray,** Argentina
7. **Idelfonso Bethelmy,** Venezuela
8. **Oscar Arnal,** Venezuela
9. **Greg Coverson,** Columbus, OH
10. **Rodolfo Sanchez,** Spain

FEATHERWEIGHTS
World Champ: Salvador Sanchez, Mexico
1. **Wilfredo Gomez,** Puerto Rico
2. **Eusebio Pedroza,** Panama
3. **Danny Lopez,** Alhambra, CA
4. **Ruben Castillo,** Bakersfield, CA
5. **Rocky Lockridge,** Newark, NJ
6. **Juan Malvarez,** Argentina
7. **Pat Ford,** Guyana

fered his only loss, when he was floored in the first round and outpointed by Esteban DeJesus.

"Duran, to me, was an exciting, colorful, hard-punching, charismatic fighter, but I think he suffered from a genuine lack of competition. While he held the title, the fighters in the lightweight division were at the lowest caliber in the division's history, and his manager avoided some of the better mediocrities.

"At a time when Duran could have moved up slightly in weight to meet Jose Napoles at 140 pounds, he never would. He could have boxed Wilfred Benitez for the junior welterweight title, but again his manager declined. Benitez was just a teenager at the time. To my way of think-

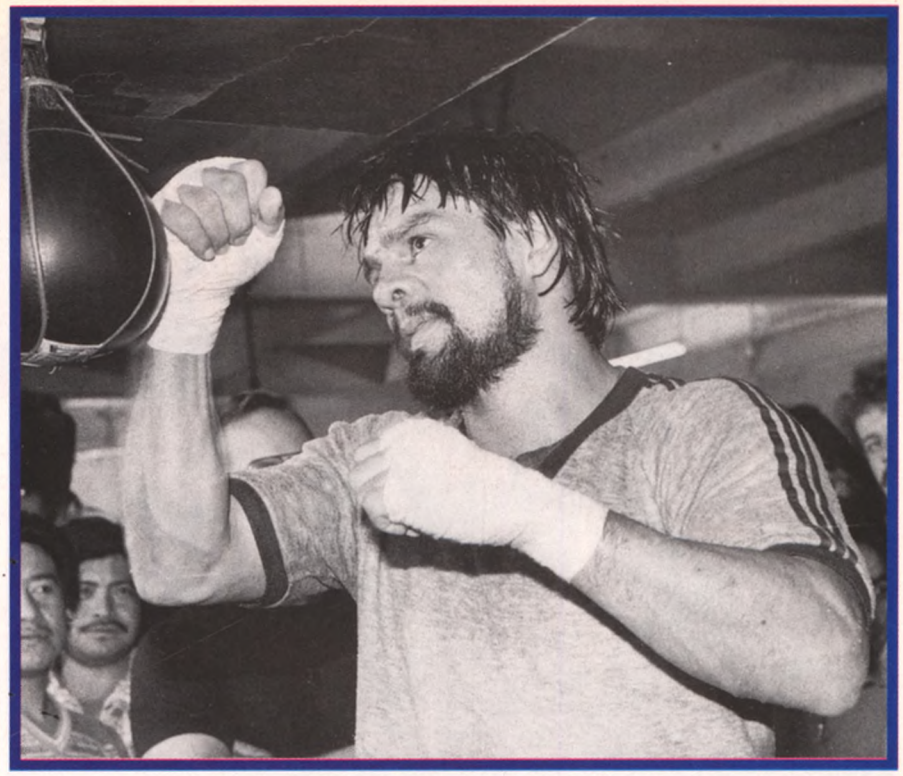
8. Roberto **Castanon,** Spain
9. Juan **LaPorte,** New York, NY
10. Eddie **Ndukwu,** Nigeria

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS
World Champ: **Wilfredo Gomez,** Puerto Rico
1. Leo **Randolph,** Tacoma, WA
2. Ricardo **Cardona,** Colombia
3. Leo **Cruz,** Dominican Republic
4. Mike **Ayala,** San Antonio, TX
5. Nicky **Perez,** Tucson, AZ
6. Sergio **Palma,** Argentina
7. Soon-Hyun **Chung,** Korea
8. Jose **Caba,** Dominican Republic
9. Jose **Cervantes,** Colombia
10. Derrik **Holmes,** New Carrollton, MD

BANTAMWEIGHTS
World Champ: **Jorge Lujan,** Panama
1. Lupe **Pintor,** Mexico
2. Alberto **Davila,** Los Angeles, CA
3. Jeff **Chandler,** Philadelphia, PA
4. Roberto **Rubaldino,** Mexico
5. Carlos **Zarate,** Mexico
6. Julian **Solis,** Puerto Rico
7. Oscar **Muniz,** Los Angeles, CA
8. Johnny **Owen,** Wales
9. Rafael **Orono,** Venezuela
10. Jose **Uziga,** Argentina

FLYWEIGHTS
World Champ: **Shoji Oguma,** Japan
1. Yoko **Gushiken,** Japan
2. Tae-Shik **Kim,** South Korea
3. Guty **Espadas,** Mexico
4. Chan-Hee **Park,** Korea
5. Betulio **Gonzalez,** Venezuela
6. Hilario **Zapata,** Panama
7. Luis **Ibarra,** Panama
8. Charlie **Magri,** England
9. Joey **Olivo,** Los Angeles, CA
10. Martin **Vargas,** Chile

ing, Duran never boxed a really good fighter in his career. Maybe they weren't around, but I don't think so. His management was very careful with him. They still are; not Roberto himself. He would fight anyone anytime.



Duran's strength and punching power would have made it possible for him to compete with other lightweight stars who followed Leonard, said Arcel. "The element of surprise was taught to confuse an opponent, and Duran has learned that lesson well," the trainer said.

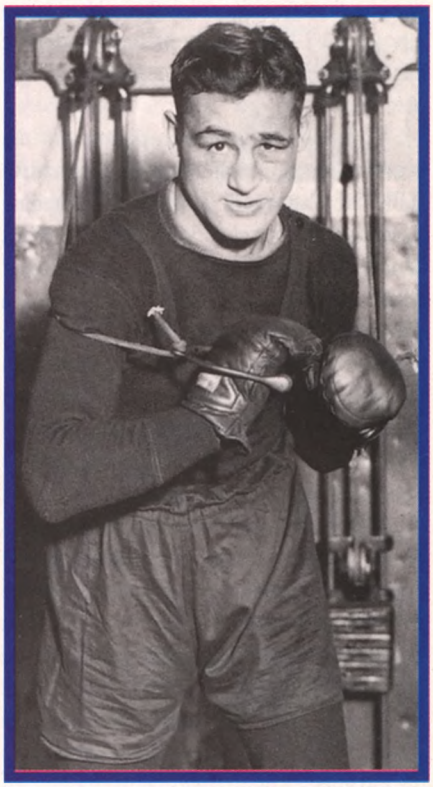
"In Panama, if a poll were taken, most Panamanians would tell you that they thought Ismael Laguna was a better lightweight than Duran.

"The best lightweights I ever saw—and their great records against great opposition will bear me out—are Canzoneri, Armstrong, Williams, Ross, Beau Jack, Bob Montgomery, Ambers, Ortiz, Lew Jenkins, and Duran. I doubt whether Duran could have survived their competition. Look at their opposition. Ross didn't fight long as a lightweight, so you could insert Joe Brown in the ninth spot and move the others up."

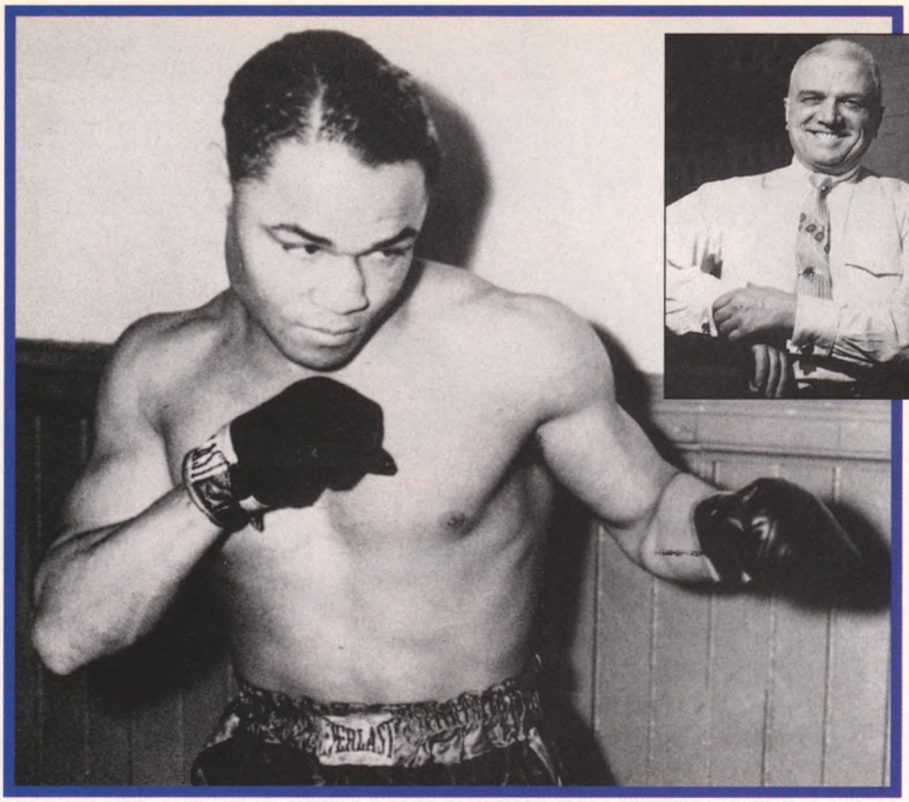
Lester Bromberg, 71, retired New York *World-Telegram* and *New York Post* boxing writer since 1937:

"Every attempt to compare outstanding fighters to their predecessors in a prior generation is bound to meet a snag. For a fact, they never can meet at their peak. I lean to the answer that the late Al Buck, *Post* boxing expert, would give: 'If you grow a near-perfect peach, then produce a similar fruit, can you honestly say one is better than the other?'

"Duran has typified a physical fighter, especially in exploding punch. His faults ... have been lack of classic form, an inability to adapt himself to taller men. Then how



Duran would not have beaten Billy Petrolle (pictured) or Sid Terris, maintained Teddy Brenner, former president and matchmaker of Madison Square Garden. Though Brenner thought Duran was exciting and colorful, Brenner felt he suffered from a genuine lack of competition at lightweight.



Cus D'Amato (inset) believed Henry Armstrong was close to unbeatable at lightweight. Said D'Amato: "Armstrong threw too many punches and applied too much pressure, with the heart of a lion."

does he manage a record that has been virtually perfect? It is simply his genius that he has been able to spot these faults and ride over them.

"But does he box on a plane with the peerless Leonard? Can he blend competitive skills like Canzoneri? Is he equal in landing sudden-death punches with Jenkins? Does he have the intense boxing abilities of Ross? Can he seriously be compared with a tough Ambers? Would he have scaled the three peaks of Armstrong? How do you shape him up with a Beau Jack, Williams, Carter as champions or even by what slide rule can you expect to rate such non-champs as Tendler, White, Petrolle, et al?

"There are supplementary factors also going against ratings. The caliber of the opposition met by the old champs and the current one is another story. The dedication of the ancients must tip over the skills of the new world. The average experience of a challenger bidding for a title in the old days would be 50 or 100 fights. Today, he goes to the top after 25 or 30 fights, at the most.

"To set them aright: I will not say Duran can step into the past and handle the best. He is the best today—and that's enough."

Cus D'Amato, 73, manager of world champions Floyd Patterson and Jose Torres, still active as a trainer of young talent. Although D'Amato concedes he has not seen all the fighters on his all-time list, he is an astute student of the sport, going to the record book to make comparisons:

"While Duran may have been outstanding in his time, there is no comparison with the type of opposition he faced as compared to the others. He had much fewer top-class fighters to box. My choices of all-time lightweights, not necessarily in order:

"Leonard—Great boxer, great puncher. His record speaks for itself. He was not a managed fighter, but fought anyone and anywhere, and as many as a dozen times. Almost invariably the winner. He would be too smart and punch too hard for Duran.

"Canzoneri—Great boxer, good puncher, great record, with the heart of a lion. He could do it all and had to since his manager fed him the toughest in their own hometowns. Canzoneri by a decision.

"Armstrong—The one and only. At his best was seemingly unbeatable. Armstrong threw too many punches and applied too much pressure, with the heart of a lion. Armstrong the winner.

"Ross—A great boxer, not too much of a puncher, and game. A toss-up with Duran.

"Jimmy McLarnin—Lots of heart, great puncher and boxer. As a 16-year-old, he beat Fidel LaBarba and the best in that [flyweight] division and all the divisions he boxed in. I like McLarnin against Duran.

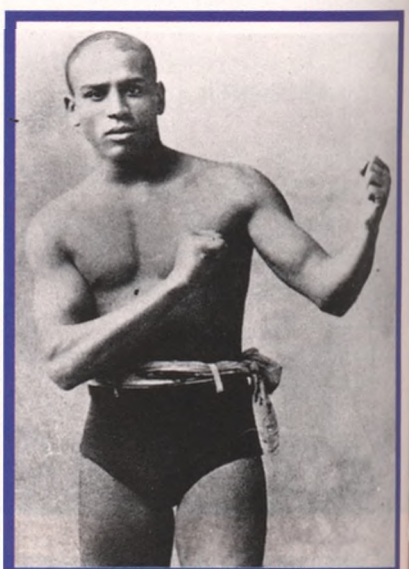
"Gans—I never saw him, but on his record in those days ranks with Leonard and the best. Must pick him over Duran. He beat Joe Walcott a couple of times.

"Kid Lavigne—Although I never saw him, I have discussed him [and Gans] with several people who did and had keen judgment I respected. I must pick him over Duran. Of the ones named, only Ross and McLarnin were managed fighters; the others were thrown in with the wolves and survived. They missed no one in their class and often fought welters and sometimes middles and light heavies."

Don Dunphy, 68, veteran radio blow-by-blow announcer and more recently a television fight commentator:

"There is no question Duran was one of the greatest lightweights. Whether he was *the* greatest I can't answer, but his credentials are as good as anyone's. I never saw Leonard fight—my first lightweight champion was Canzoneri—but a look at his record shows his superb ability as a boxer. In 209 bouts, he never lost a decision. But he fought 115 no-decision bouts, which leaves a lot of question marks.

"Duran has an amazing record as a lightweight ... Roberto defended the title 12



There's never been another lightweight like Joe Gans (pictured), opined writer Bill Heinz. "After Gans, I guess, the next best was Leonard," Heinz said. He placed Duran in a group with Armstrong, Petrolle, Barney Ross, Lew Jenkins, and Tony Canzoneri.

times scoring 11 knockouts. This is interesting in any comparison with Leonard because Benny was a master boxer. It would be a tough one to pick.

"Of the others, I give Ross a great chance against Duran because of his great boxing ability, his quick hands, and ability to take it. In 82 bouts, Barney was never stopped.

"Armstrong, with his crowding tactics, his boundless energy, and experience, would likewise be tough.

"Beau Jack, Canzoneri, Montgomery, Carter, Joe Brown, and Paddy DeMarco would have been on a suicide mission because they would have traded with Duran. No one trades with Duran and gets away with it."

Bill Heinz, 65, novelist, author, and former boxing writer for the New York *Sun* and New York *World-Telegram*:

"I go back only to 1945, and thus missed the real golden oldies like Gans and Leonard. That out of the way, I rate the lightweights of the past 35 years as follows:

"Duran, Williams, Brown, and Ortiz. I stop at this point because, if one reflects on what one has heard from eye witnesses, or read, about the all-time lightweights going back to the turn of the century, those four are the only ones who earn consideration for entry among the all-time top 10. I am also aware that Ortiz beat Brown for the title, but it must be remembered that Brown, at that time, was a month short of 36.

"About those Golden Oldies, I knew two men who knew Gans and whose opinion of fights and fighters I held in high esteem. One was Dumb Dan Morgan ... a most knowledgeable student of the art. The other was Harry Lenny, a trainer-manager, who in his youth used to spar with Gans.

"Gans, Lenny told me, was the great proponent of punching to a point. As Gans worked it out, the vulnerable points are the forehead on either side, the chin on either side, the forehead just above the nose, the solar plexus, and the area under the heart.

"'You see,' Morgan told me, 'winning them fights in his last years (Gans was dying of consumption), he knew he had to save his strength for one or two punches. He would go out and move around and feint those guys and figure them out. Today they'd boo a man for doing that, but when he had them figured, he'd come back to the corner and say: 'At about one minute-and-a-half in this round, with a right hand under the heart and a left hook on the chin.' And he'd do it. Ah, let's face it. There's never been another like Gans.

"So, out of all that, I like to believe that the best of them all was a guy who died five years before I was born. After Gans, I guess, the next best was Leonard, who even studied four-round fighters in the gym.

"After those two, who can rate another eight with any sense of certainty? Armstrong, Ross, Petrolle, Canzoneri, Jenkins, Duran, Williams, and Brown. On his best night, any one might have licked the other. For example, on the one night in his life when he was really in shape, Jenkins destroyed Ambers in three rounds with that great right hand and his hunger.

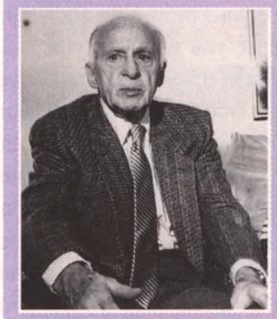
"As for Duran, his street style is misleading and deceiving. He's a little Dempsey, cleverer than casual observers know. His best move is when he times a right hand, slips it while sliding his right foot forward and then, out of that instant southpaw stance, crosses his left." ■

THE RING, September 1980

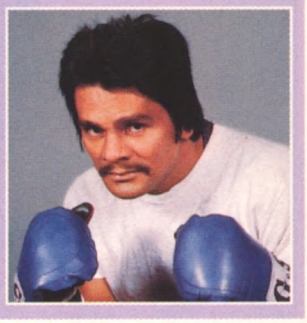
***The Cover*:** Roberto Duran's stunning 15-round decision over Sugar Ray Leonard in Montreal forced experts to reflect on just how good "Hands Of Stone" was. Though Duran's victory came at welterweight, the win had many debating where Duran belonged in the pantheon of lightweight greats.

***Gentleman Jim Watt*:** Jim Watt broke out of his Glasgow, Scotland, cocoon and solidified his position as one of the world's best lightweights by winning a 15-round decision over Howard Davis Jr. The respected Watt, making his third WBC title defense, received international attention for what was considered the biggest win of his career to that point.

***The Many Sides Of Michael Dokes*:** Heavyweight contender Michael Dokes showed he was more than just a slugger. Dokes, then 22, strived to be a renaissance man, able to cook for himself and make his own clothes, and he aspired to one day be a fashion designer or gourmet chef.



***Ray Arcel's Roll Call Of Fighters*:** The legendary trainer recalled what it was like to work with boxing greats Tony Zale, Barney Ross, Ezzard Charles, Benny Leonard, and finally, Roberto Duran. The 80-year-old Arcel trained 19 champions, dating back to 1924, when he worked with bantamweight champ Abe Attell.



***Fighter Of The Month*:** Roberto Duran added to his already considerable legacy with a 15-round decision over Sugar Ray Leonard to win the WBC welterweight title. It was Leonard's first loss, and it was quite possibly the greatest win of Duran's storied career.

THE A, B, C & DEAS OF BOXING

COUNTERING THE RIGHT CROSS

By Tommy Deas

You've watched the world's best fighters and read about them in this magazine, and now you want to give boxing a try, or at least learn a little more about the mechanics of the sport. Welcome to THE RING'S bi-monthly instructional feature on boxing's basics. Bear in mind, the techniques described here are just one of many approaches to the Sweet Science. The most important thing is to find a good coach and follow his instructions. All instructions on these pages are geared for an orthodox, or right-handed, stance. If you are left-handed, merely turn everything around.

So you have an opponent, or maybe a sparring partner, who has a good right hand, and he's not shy about using it. What you need is something that will make him think twice before throwing the punch—something that will let him know there may be unpleasant consequences to his actions.

What you need is a way to counter the right hand. This installment will teach you the proper way to turn one of your opponent's most potent weapons into an opportunity for you to do some damage. The most effective way to counter a right cross is to roll under the punch and return fire with your own left hook.

Counterpunches are designed to take advantage of openings that are created when the other fighter leads. The best reason to counter with a left hook is that in throwing his right cross, your opponent leaves that side of his head open to a counter. To get into proper position to throw this counter, however, you will need to learn to anticipate when the right cross is coming and then master some simple reaction moves.

There are three basic steps to executing this counterpunch. First, start by taking a basic stance, with your left foot in front, left shoulder angled toward your opponent and both hands high. As you see your opponent begin to throw his right, you want to dip to your right, away from the path of the punch.

To do this, bend your left knee slightly and bend a few inches to the right at the waist. This will move your head over and slightly in front of your right knee. You don't want to lean over too far, because you will lose your balance and slow the reaction time for your return punch, giving your opponent time to react and cover up. You only need to move six to eight inches or so, just enough to let the right cross sail over your left shoulder. Make sure to keep your hands up, so if your opponent adjusts his aim he won't find an open target.

The second step is to roll under the right hand. Since your dip took you out of the way of the incoming punch, your opponent's momentum will carry his hand over your left shoulder. As soon as the right cross goes by your left ear, begin to roll your head and shoulders under the punch and to the left.

To do this, move your head and shoulders in a half-circle to the left until your left shoulder is over your left knee, bending your knees a little as you execute the move. This will put you in position to throw the hook while your opponent is still vulnerable. Your head will need to bob downward as you move under the punch, rolling in a curve that takes your head under his extended right arm. As you complete the roll, shift your weight to your left knee. You will be able to feel your body weight on your left knee and foot, with your left hip right over your left foot as you bring the motion to a halt. Make sure not to lean too far forward, which will leave you looking at the floor instead of at the target, and don't roll too far to the left and throw yourself off-balance. When the roll is complete, your left shoulder should be positioned over your left knee, with your right shoulder rotated forward toward your opponent's body.

The first two steps have allowed you to evade the right hand and position yourself to throw the counter. The third step is to simply throw your left hook. You can counter to the head or to the body with equal effectiveness from this position.

To throw the hook, rotate your left hip and shoulder to the right with full force in an explosive

fashion. Drive your left hip up a little by pushing down with your left foot and up from the knee, giving your punch more power and speed. Uncurl your left arm to about a 90 degree angle at the elbow, moving your left hand away from your shoulder, as the punch travels toward the target, adjusting to your opponent's distance. If he's farther away, you need an angle greater than 90 degrees. If he's closer, keep a tighter angle. Throw the punch all the way through the target, then bring it back the way it came as you position your body back into your basic stance.

Always remember to keep your right hand up when you throw a hook, whether as a lead or counter. If your opponent decides to throw a hook at the same time you do, you want to have your hand up to protect yourself.

To master this counterpunch, start by practicing the first step, dipping to the right. Imagine the punch coming your way while you shadowbox and watch the mirror. You want to develop a quick, fluid move that will allow you to flow naturally into the second step.

Once you have grown comfortable with the first step, start adding the roll move. Keep your rear end low and your back relatively straight as you roll, so you are not bent forward straight from the waist. You should always be able to see your opponent. Start with a slow roll, trying to keep it concise and fluid, and avoid jerking your body over. If you do jerk your body over, you will probably end up moving your head over in a straight line rather than an arc, which can result in banging your head against your opponent's arm and spoiling your chance to counter. Once you are satisfied with your roll, begin adding speed so you can get your body in position to throw the counter hook before your opponent has recovered from missing his punch.

After you have put the first two steps together, complete the exercise by finishing with your left hook. Work the three steps into one uninterrupted motion, starting slowly as always and adding speed once you have the mechanics worked out.

Once you have practiced this move enough in front of the mirror to have a good feel for how to execute it, work with a gymmate or friend to shadowbox together. Get him to throw his right cross in slow motion, and make your roll and counter to get a feel for the timing of the maneuver. Take turns leading and countering.

Finally, take the move over to the heavybag and get to work. You will have to imagine the right cross coming and react, but now you will be able to feel the impact of the counter and work out all the little kinks so that you end up with an effective punch.

After you have practiced with the mirror, a shadowboxing partner, and the heavybag, it's time to lace up the gloves and work on it live with full contact. If you have mastered this counter, that opponent or sparring partner will be in for a surprise the next time he throws that right cross. ■

Tommy Deas is a sportswriter for the Tuscaloosa (Alabama) News and a trainer of professional and amateur boxers.

PHOTOS BY SPARROW ESTES

Professional heavyweights Wade Lewis and Marcus McGee demonstrate the three-step process for countering a right cross with a left hook. First, McGee dips down and to the right, so the punch sails harmlessly by (top). Then he rolls to his left, positioning himself for the counter (center). And lastly, he lets loose with a hook, taking advantage of the opening created by Lewis' missed right hand (bottom).

COME OUT WRITING

Letters may be edited for reasons of space and clarity. Send your comments to Come Out Writing, The Ring, P.O. Box 1148, Fort Washington, PA 19034. Or e-mail letters to comeoutwriting@yahoo.com. E-mailed letters will include the writer's e-mail address unless a city and state of origin is provided.

VARGAS NEEDED INSTRUCTION

Teddy Atlas has discussed the lack of proper corrective coaching in some boxers' corners during a bout. An example of this occurred during the Oscar De La Hoya-Fernando Vargas bout. De La Hoya was receiving clear instructions on how to box Vargas, while in the Vargas corner, they were pumping up his ego with comments like, "You can do it," and "You've got him." The lack of clear readjusting proved to be fatal to Vargas in the later rounds.

HOWARD PLUNKETT
Williams, OR

HBO HOMERS

Having just watched the De La Hoya-Vargas fight, I wonder how many other readers are sick of the favoritism shown today's elite fighters. While I give full credit to De La Hoya for his victory, I found it hard to cheer for him given the huge advantage his kidney belt positioning allowed him. While George Foreman may claim it offers little protection, I agreed with Harold Lederman that it was unfair and offered at least a psychological edge. By far the most infuriating part of the fight, though, was HBO commentator Jim Lampley. Listening to Lampley's almost orgasmic excitement in the 11th round was the low point in a long line of historically slanted commentary he in particular has delivered regarding HBO house fighters. These fighters are not De La Hoya and Jones, but Oscar and Roy. Surely this type of "homer" broadcasting belongs only on local broadcasts of team sports. The worldwide audience for boxing deserves better.

DAN WHITE
Ottawa, Ontario

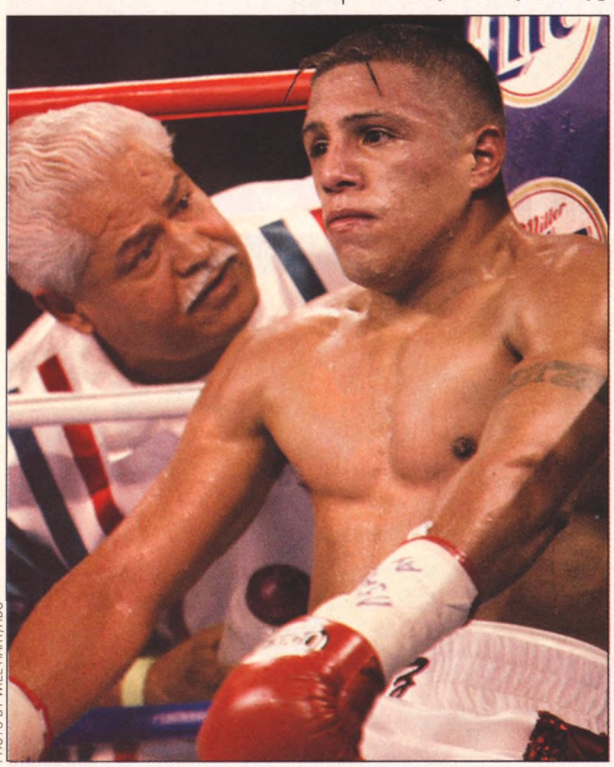


PHOTO BY WILL HART/HBO

Fernando Vargas needed instructors, not cheerleaders, in his corner the night he fought Oscar De La Hoya, states reader Howard Plunkett. Was Vargas' inability to adjust later in the fight the primary cause of his 11th-round TKO defeat?

LEWIS MIGHT HAVE BEATEN ALI

I'm so sick of hearing how Lennox Lewis would've had no chance against Muhammad Ali. I'm not saying that Lewis would have beaten Ali, but it's not unreasonable to think that he could have.

For one, Ali never fought anyone built like Lewis. Ernie Terrell was 6'7", but only weighed 212½ pounds. Buster Mathis was huge, but fat. George Foreman was a powerhouse, but still smaller than Lewis and not as quick or skillful.

Ali had three life-or-death struggles with the 205½-pound Joe Frazier, and at the age of 36, Ali was being pummeled by the unskilled 197½-pound Leon Spinks, whereas Lewis is still beating the best contenders available.

People say that Lewis wouldn't have the chin to withstand "The Greatest," but Ali never hurt Ken Norton, who was smaller than Lennox and was known to have a shaky chin. Foreman fell due to a lack of stamina, a problem Lewis doesn't have.

The blind worship of Ali only tends to distort boxing history. He had several questionable victories and was pretty washed-up by the age of 34. Let's let Lennox have his glory; Ali has already had more than his fair share.

JONATHAN J. DONAHUE
Woburn, MA

While many scoff at the notion of Lennox Lewis (pictured vs. Mike Tyson) being good enough to take a prime Muhammad Ali, reader Jonathan J. Donahue feels otherwise. Donahue claims Ali would have had trouble dealing with a skillful big man like Lewis.

BENVENUTI WAS A CLASS ACT

I really appreciated Robert Cassidy's article on Nino Benvenuti in the December 2002 issue of THE RING. I never knew the quality of opposition Nino had faced and defeated during his career. It made me look at him from a different perspective. The fact that Benvenuti never wore a mouthpiece until his second fight with Emile Griffith was also interesting.

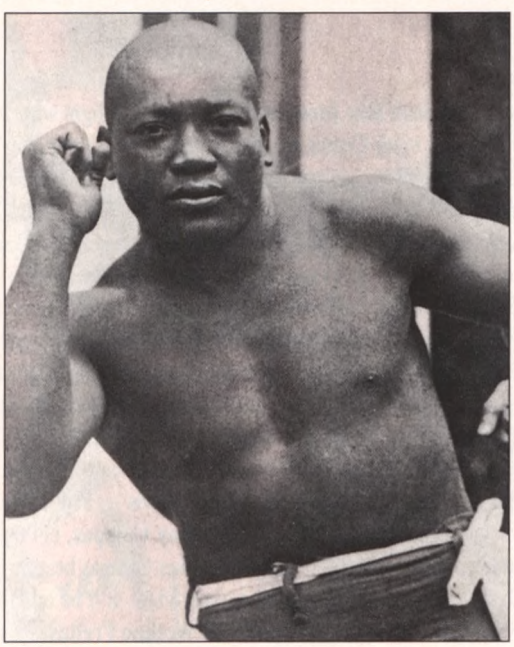
I admire that Nino never attempted a comeback after retiring, even turning down a million dollars by an Italian businessman, which was a huge amount of money for fighters back then in the early-1970s. I wish more fighters would do the same and not stick around too long. I really enjoy reading about fighters from the past, and was wondering if maybe sometime in the future, there could be a story about "Bad" Bennie Briscoe or "Rock-A-Bye" Ruben Olivares, a couple of my favorite fighters from days gone by.

RICKY FLANAGAN
Tipton, MO

TOO MUCH TALKING ON PPV

As a diehard boxing fan for many years now, I have been buying quite a lot of pay-per-view fight cards. The last few, the quality of the fights has been sub-par. They used to have at least four fights, and that number has been cut down to three fights. So for about 60 to 90 minutes per show, you have to listen to talk from the announcers. The average for this is now $49.95, a high price to pay for listening. I think most boxing fans want to see more boxing and less talking. Talking is what *SportsCenter* is for.

BOB ZAKIS
South Elgin, IL



Why was heavyweight legend Jack Johnson not named by THE RING among "The 80 Best Fighters Of The Last 80 Years," wonders reader Jamal Bowman. The answer is that Johnson was ineligible for the list because his prime ended more than 80 years ago.

RANK RANKINGS FROM THE RING?

In the October 1999 issue of THE RING, the special section under the title "The 20 Greatest Fighters Of The 20th Century" ranked Muhammad Ali as number one, followed by Joe Louis at number two, Sugar Ray Robinson at number three, and Henry Armstrong at number four.

Now, in THE RING's 2002 annual, "The 80 Best Fighters Of The Last 80 Years," Robinson is number one, followed by Armstrong, then Ali, and Louis. What could these great fighters have done in the last three years to change their rankings? In the two issues, Willie Pep is ranked 12th in the "20 Greatest Fighters" story, and ranked number six in the "80 Best Fighters" issue. In the "20 Greatest Fighters," Jack Johnson is rated number five, and is not even mentioned in the "80 Best Fighters" issue. Are you also telling me that Lennox Lewis and Mike Tyson are better than Jack Johnson? What is the difference in both issues and why are there different rankings?

JAMAL BOWMAN
Cleveland, OH

[Editor's note: As was explained in the introduction to the "20 Greatest Fighters" section, that listing placed a strong measure of importance on a fighter's "historical significance and impact not only on the game, but on the time and era in which he lived and fought." The "80 Best Fighters" rankings were weighted more toward straight-forward in-ring accomplishment, thus accounting for many of the differences. As for Jack Johnson, his prime ended before THE RING'S debut in 1922, making him ineligible for inclusion on the more recent list.]

PERNELL'S TOO HIGH

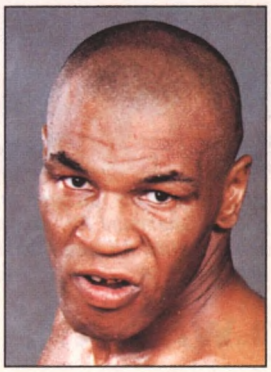
THE RING has always been the most credible and unbiased source of boxing analysis and opinion. In light of that, you can imagine how shocked I was to see Pernell Whitaker ranked in the top 10 greatest fighters, right behind Sugar Ray Leonard, in your 80th anniversary special. If this lofty ranking would have come from Max Kellerman or Larry Merchant, I would have brushed it off as a mere unprofessional and biased use of podium. But with it coming out of "The Bible Of Boxing," one wonders if perhaps the very impressionable but irresponsible TV personalities have finally worn on the last objective source of boxing history. I just hope you can reevaluate your standings for future publications by honoring fighters more deserving of such accolades and putting into perspective the significant yet modest accomplishments of the most felt-sorry-for fighter of all-time.

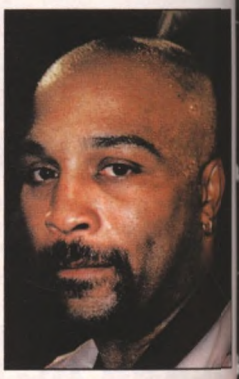
EDDIE SOSA
Racine, WI ■

LOOKING AHEAD

By Eric Raskin

BUDDY ON BOARD





Tyson has a new "Buddy"

Mike Tyson is not going to get any younger. And after getting the bad sportsmanship beaten out of him by **Lennox Lewis** last June, it's logical to think that Tyson's never going to get any better, either. But maybe, just maybe, that won't be the case. A great trainer can sometimes turn everything around for a fighter, and it appeared 99 percent certain as we went to press that for his next fight, Tyson would be enlisting the help of **James "Buddy" McGirt**, the hottest trainer in the game.

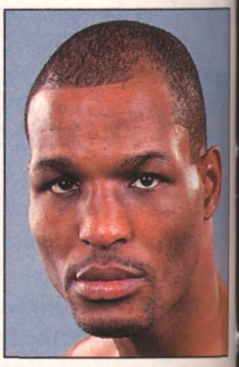
McGirt is almost everyone's pick as the 2002 Trainer of the Year, thanks to his exceptional work resurrecting **Arturo Gatti**, lifting **Antonio Tarver** to new heights, and turning **Nate Campbell** into one of the most talked-about new faces in the game. On February 22, probably in Memphis, Tennessee—the scene of Tyson's debacle against Lewis—we'll get to see if McGirt can reverse Tyson's downward momentum and dig up whatever's left of the "Kid Dynamite" of old.

The view from here is that Tyson has picked the perfect opponent to look great against. **Clifford Etienne**, a top-15-ish contender with just one loss on his record, is certainly a respected enough name. But he's a tad chinny, very easy to hit, and not an especially hard banger. Only if the Lewis fight drained the last ounce of resistance out of Tyson should "The Black Rhino" have a chance.

But it's not just winning that matters for Tyson. It's how he wins. If he's spectacular enough, a rematch with Lewis becomes that much more realistic. If McGirt can get Tyson moving his head, using that head movement to set up openings, taking advantage of those openings with combinations, and ultimately laying Etienne out in highlight-reel fashion, then Tyson can continue to make himself and those around him very rich.

And what if McGirt can make that all happen and then get Tyson to defeat Lewis? Four words: Trainer of the Century.

LISTEN UP



Hopkins: Heading home for Hakkar

You never know for sure with **Roy Jones**, but it looks like his fight with **John Ruiz** is a go for March 1 at the Thomas & Mack Center in Las Vegas, with HBO Pay-Per-View to televise. Look for in-depth previews of this compelling matchup in future issues of THE RING ... Meanwhile, **Bernard Hopkins**, having failed to put together a deal to fight Jones, is settling for a relatively modest payday to make his mandatory defense against unknown Frenchman **Morrade Hakkar** on January 11. The pay-per-view bout will take place at the First Union Center in Hopkins' hometown of Philadelphia ... On February 1, we'll get a little more clarity in the highly competitive featherweight division when **Juan Manuel Marquez** meets **Manuel Medina** on yet another pay-per-view card. They'll be fighting for the vacant alphabet belt that Medina was robbed of against **Johnny Tapia**, but more importantly, the winner will emerge as a deserving challenger for an all-Mexican showdown with world champ **Marco Antonio Barrera**. The undercard of the Top Rank PPV may feature a bout between top-five welterweights **Antonio Margarito** and **Andrew "Six Heads" Lewis** ... It was reported last issue that **Sugar Shane Mosley** would be making his 154-pound debut against used-up **Yory Boy Campas**, but that has changed—arguably for the worse. Mosley will instead face **Raul Marquez**, whom you may remember Campas beating into a bloody mess five years ago. The only good thing you can say about this show is that it's not pay-per-view. It'll be on HBO on February 8 ... Showtime may have a mismatch of its own a week later, as top junior lightweight **Acelino Freitas** is slated for a February 15 date. One strong candidate to challenge him: **Kevin Kelley**, the 35-year-old former featherweight titlist. Let's hope "Popo" flushes him in a flash, rather than prolonging the beating with his new boxing style ... The first significant fight of the new year comes January 4 in Washington, D.C., when junior welters **DeMarcus "Chop Chop" Corley** and **Randall Bailey** collide. Thumbs up to Showtime for this one. Don't be surprised if it turns out to be a Fight of the Year candidate. ∎

TITLE™ Classic BOXING

Classic Quality... Classic Low Prices!

New

WATER HEAVYBAG #HBW **$59.99**

TRAINING GLOVES #CTSGV **$39.99 Pair**

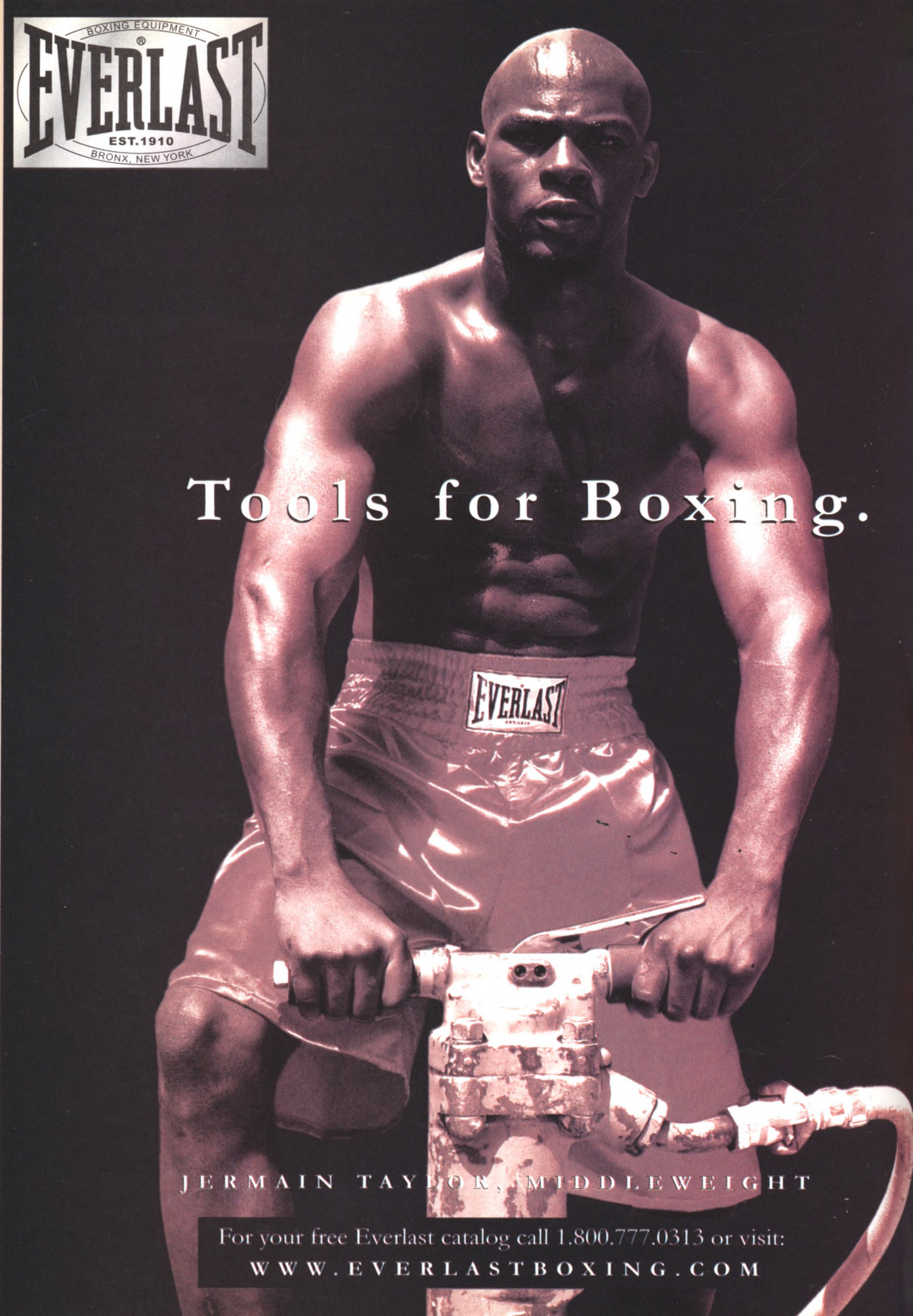
HEADGEAR #CTHGT **$39.99**

BAG GLOVES #ETBG **$19.99 Pair**

TRAINING GLOVES #CTSGL **$29.99 Pair**

PUNCH MITTS #PMC **$19.99 Pair**

Call 1-800-999-1213 for a free catalog or visit our website at www.titleboxing.com


BOXING EQUIPMENT
EVERLAST
EST.1910
BRONX, NEW YORK
Tools for Boxing.
EVERLAST
JERMAIN TAYLOR, MIDDLEWEIGHT
For your free Everlast catalog call 1.800.777.0313 or visit:
WWW.EVERLASTBOXING.COM